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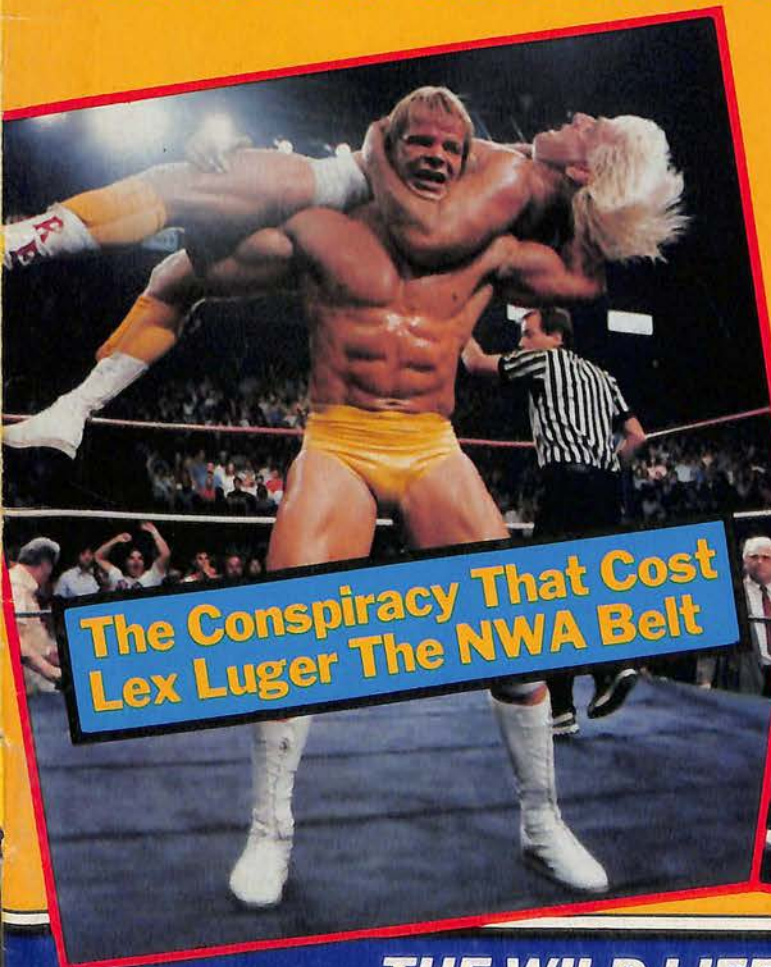


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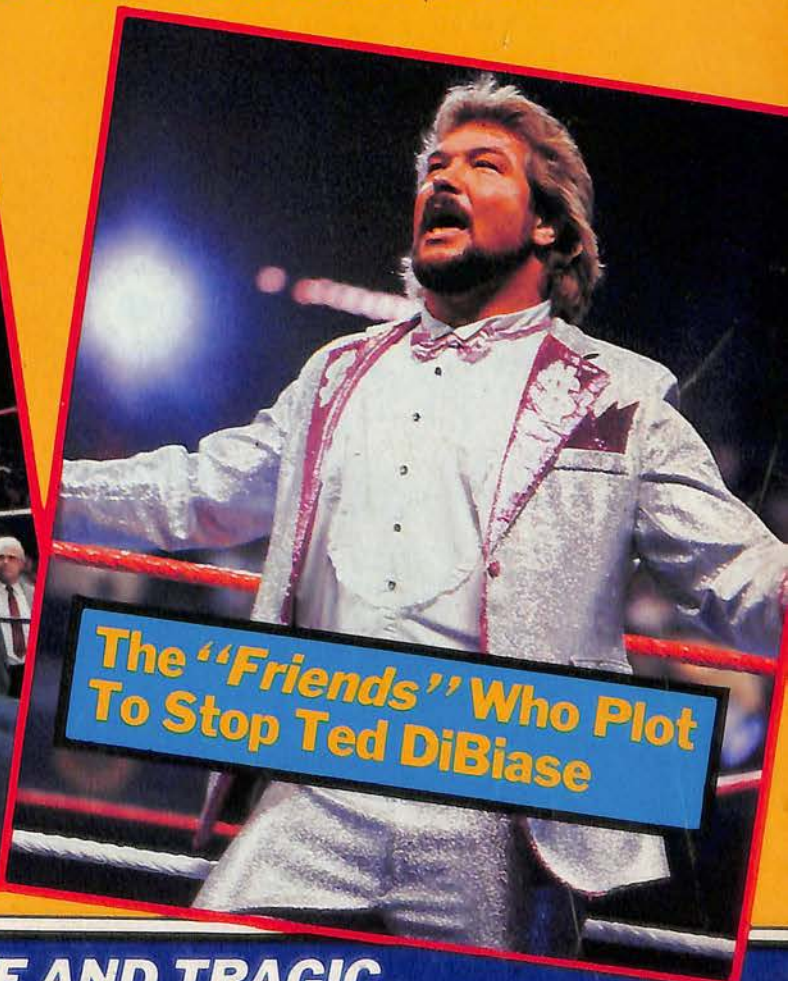
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Ted DiBiase by David Fitzgerald

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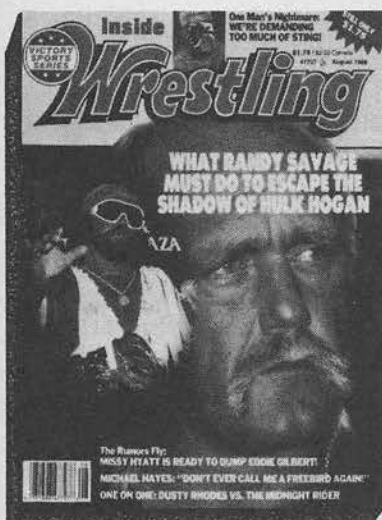
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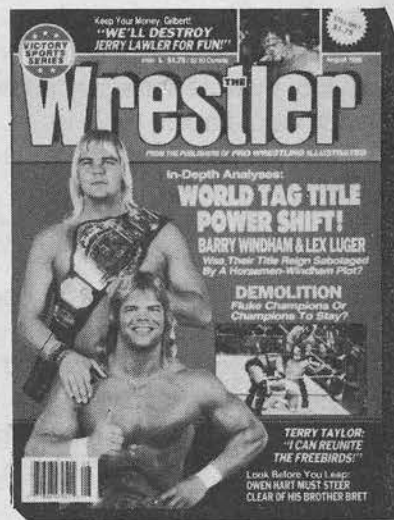
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A READER RESPONDS

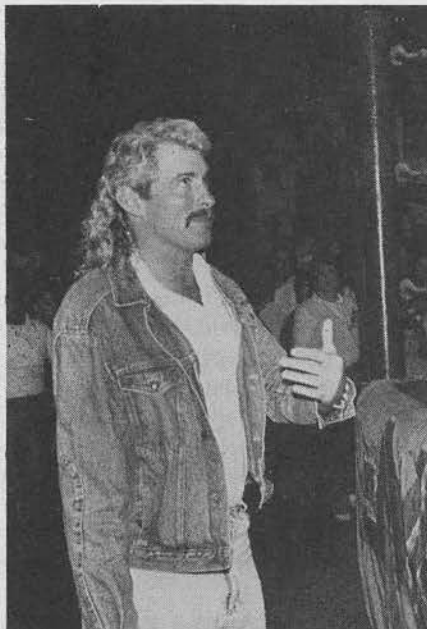
I have two responses for two readers whose letters appeared in your September 1988 issue.

The first letter, Darren Weippert's "T.A. Turmoil," said that Magnum T.A. should be banned from ringside.

Magnum should *not* be banned from ringside! Sure, he tripped and slapped Tully Blanchard. But in all matches involving The Four Horsemen, outside interference plays a major role. Magnum was only trying to fight fire with fire. No one should be allowed at ringside once a match begins, especially Jim Cornette and J.J. Dillon. If it weren't for them, *none* of their wrestlers would have any championships. I wish the ratings in *The Wrestler* reflected this.

The other letter, Jim Klass' "No Comparison," spoke far too highly of Demolition. Yes, Mr. Klass, Ax and Smash are WWF World champions—but because of Mr. Fuji's interference. They win the same way that The Four Horsemen win in the NWA.

When are the ratings in *The Wrestler* going to start penalizing wrestlers for interference, using foreign objects, or intentionally



Should Magnum T.A. be banned from ringside because of his potential for match interference? There is no clear consensus among our readers.

disqualifying themselves? Doing this would be a big step toward improving the ratings—and maybe even ending rulebreaking! The true fans are getting tired of this!

EARLE BROWN
Middletown, NY

GREAT AMERICAN TRASH ...

For 10 years, I have been a loyal supporter of the NWA. I felt the NWA was superior to any

wrestling federation. I am not so sure now. The Great American Bash in Baltimore was one of the biggest failures I have ever seen.

First of all, the World tag team title match featuring champions Arn Anderson and Tully Blanchard against Sting and Nikita Koloff was not nearly long enough. A 20-minute time limit? If Arn and Tully were *real* champs, they'd wrestle under a 60-minute time limit.

The Tower of Doom was exciting, but the ending was disgusting as Kevin Sullivan attacked Precious and tried to choke her. The NWA must take action against Sullivan.

Thumbs down to Ronnie Garvin. I never thought Ron would accept money to knock out Dusty Rhodes as Dusty was attempting to win back the U.S. title he never lost in the ring.

Of course, the Ric Flair-Lex Luger title match was ridiculous. Besides in a first blood match, when do you see a match stopped for blood? Maybe once in a million. A great match, and some Maryland Athletic Commission official has to be there to spoil it!



I feel that I wasted my money watching the Bash on pay-per-view television. I think the entire NWA should be in the "Thumb's Down" section this month!

MARK WILKINSON
Abingdon, VA

... OR SMASH?

I'm writing about the NWA's Great American Bash card on July 10 in Baltimore. In my opinion, it was wrestling's best show ever. Sting's flying bodypress over the top rope on Arn Anderson in the opening match set the pace for the rest of the evening.

The Midnight Express showed that they can win matches *without* Jim Cornette. The Tower of Doom was the best—and most brutal—match ever created. Barry Windham would still have beaten Dusty Rhodes, even if Ronnie Garvin had not interfered. And Ric Flair kept his NWA World title!

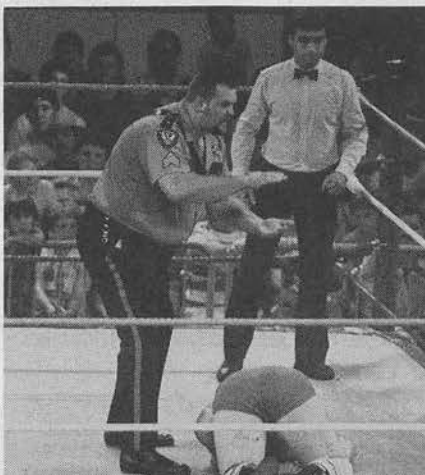
All this action was on the same card! This is why the NWA is the best!

MATT CEGIELSKI
Baltimore

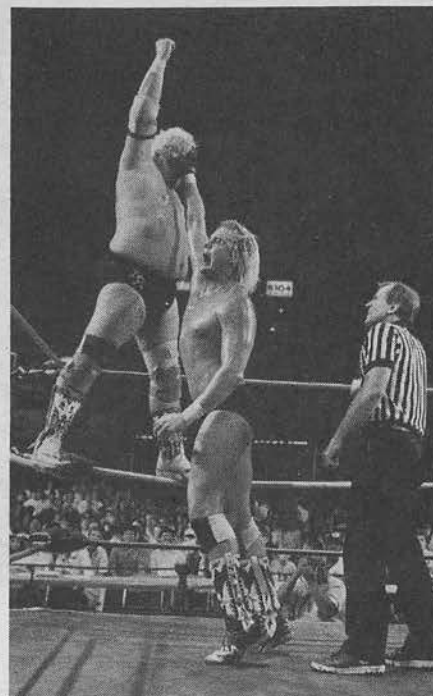
I HATE LOVE

This letter is for the ringmaster of the WWF circus, Vince McMahon.

I was watching the NWA one morning and saw nothing but wrestling from start to finish. An hour later, your "unique brand of sports entertainment" came on. While I was watching your show, a man called "Brother Love" appeared and started talking about a message called love. Right away, I was disgusted. This is



Big Bossman implores his foe to get off the mat. L.T. Mohr feels Bossman is an example of what's wrong with the WWF.



Scenes from the Baltimore Great American Bash: Ric Flair corners Lex Luger (left); Barry Windham claws Dusty Rhodes (above). Readers Mark Wilkinson and Matt Cegielski disagree as to whether the card was a success.

professional wrestling, not the PTL Club!

It's bad enough that you have an Elvis impersonator, two fools who take their advice from a flea-bitten mutt, two Road Warrior "wannabe's," and a newcomer who's supposedly a prison guard. What's his name, the Big Bossman? That's funny, I thought his name was Big Bubba Rogers.

Cut the game, McMahon. The NWA doesn't have a Honky Tonk Man or a Big Bossman; all they have is fine wrestling. You are disgracing God by bringing in this Brother Love, some reject from the Jim and Tammy Bakker show. Wise up and realize that Brother Love and all your stupid antics will wind up driving away the fans who love the sport.

L.T. MOHR
Schenectady, NY

CLASSY HISTORY

Although I find World Class wrestling boring, I must point out how much wrestling history has taken place there.

(Continued on page 44)

WHAT'S HAPPENING!

By BILL APTER

THE GREAT AMERICAN BASH in the NWA has stirred all sorts of controversies, not the least of which has been the one created by **The Midnight Express**. Only days after regaining the U.S. tag team championship, **Stan Lane** and **Bobby Eaton** lobbied NWA officials for a title match against NWA World tag team champions **Tully Blanchard** and **Arn Anderson**. Thus far, **James J. Dillon**, Executive Director of **The Four Horsemen**, hasn't embraced the idea—in fact, he's vowed *never* to give the Express a match.

"Stan and Bobby are a great team, one of the best in the sport," said Dillon. "They expertly defeated **The Fantastics** during the July 10 Great American Bash in Baltimore, and I'm sure they'll be worthy U.S. champions. But it takes more than that to get a World title shot. A *lot* more."

Jim Cornette, manager of Lane and Eaton, was livid when informed of Dillon's comments.

"Tully and Arn are the champions only because they haven't faced the best team in the sport today—and that's *us*," howled a frantic Cornette. "I hate to say this, but they're ducking us. They're



Jim Cornette and J.J. Dillon disagree as to whether their championship teams should wrestle. Cornette would like his U.S. tag champs **The Midnight Express** to face NWA World tag titlists **Tully Blanchard** and **Arn Anderson**; Dillon says the match will never take place.

scared to death."

Compounding the escalating tensions between the two teams is the fact that **Anderson** and **Bobby Eaton** have been close friends for the past few years.

"It's true, me and Bobby are close buddies out of the ring," said Anderson. "All this controversy is because of his looney manager. If you notice, Cornette's the

one doing all the complaining. I think this is all much ado about nothing. We aren't gonna wrestle the Express, so don't get your hopes up, folks."

Despite Anderson's comments, NWA officials were trying to sign a series of matches between the two championship teams. At press time, Cornette was still lobbying

(Continued on page 48)



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“I TOLD YOU they'd win it back! Didn't I? Didn't I? You wouldn't listen to me; you never do. What's wrong with you, boy?”

Those were Jim Cornette's first words when he called to inform me that his Midnight Express had regained the U.S. tag team title from The Fantastics at The Great American Bash. I had watched the match on pay-per-view TV, so it wasn't exactly news. The problem was, Cornette called me at home at three in the morning.

The obnoxious louse.

“Jim, who gave you this number?” I grumbled.

“My close personal friend Bill Apter was glad to oblige,” Cornette answered. Great, I thought. I pictured poor Bill trying to put his baby son back to bed at 3 a.m.

“Listen, Jim, I watched the match,” I said. “Bobby and Stan were fabulous. And you were wonderful up in that birdcage.” I couldn't hold back a chuckle.

WIN LOSE OR DRAW

BY ANDY RODRIGUEZ

“Don't laugh at me, Rodriguez,” Cornette shrieked. “Don't you ever laugh at me. I'll have you know I've filed a lawsuit against the NWA, Jim Crockett Promotions, the Baltimore Arena, the Maryland State Athletic Commission, and some more parties I can't even remember. They had no right tying me up in that hideous straitjacket and hauling me

up 100 feet above the arena! I'll make them pay! *Nobody* makes a fool out of Jim Cornette!”

“Well, didn't you sign a contract?” I asked. “As far as I can tell, everything they did was perfectly legal.”

“What do you know about legality?” Cornette said disgustedly. “You almost got my Midnight Express killed!”

Oh, no, I thought, not *that* again. “Listen, Jim, I gotta go. I have an interview with your pal J.J. Dillon first thing in the morn—uh, in a few hours.” I hung up the

phone without waiting for his reply.

Normally, I'm not that rude with someone on the phone—not even Cornette—but his last comment really irked me. The incident to which Cornette alluded was blown way out of proportion by him, and luckily by no one else. But ever since, it has hurt our professional

(Continued on page 52)



The Midnight Express have a good journalistic relationship with Andy Rodriguez, but their manager Jim Cornette doesn't.

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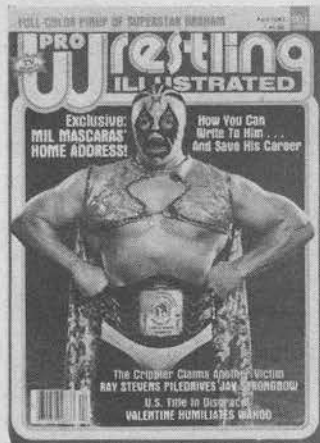
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February 1983/COLOR PINUP: Ivan Putski, Rhodes vs. Garvin, Snuka, Super Destroyer, Bockwinkel, Funk.



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April 1983/COLOR PINUP: Superstar Graham, Mil Mascaras, Valentine, Orndorff, Hart.

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December 1983/COLOR PINUP: Wahoo McDaniel, Dusty Rhodes, Hayes, Steamboat, Hansen, DiBiase.

January 1984/COLOR PINUP: Harley Race, Rick Martel, Snuka, Freebirds, Dillon, Sawyer.

February 1984/COLOR PINUP: Jin, Garvin & Sunshine, Greg Valentine, Super Destroyer, Race, Sawyer, Abdullah.

June 1984/COLOR PINUP: Dick Slater, Ted DiBiase, Wrestling II, Magnum T.A., Patera, Hogan.

July 1984/COLOR PINUP: Paul Ellering, Jimmy Valiant, JYD, Fab Ones, Gagne, Windham.

August 1984/COLOR PINUP: Stan Hansen, Jerry Lawler, Sullivan, Slaughter, Blackwell & Patera, Flair.

October 1984/COLOR PINUP: Billy Jack, Kerry Von Erich, Martel, Blanchard, Fabulous Blonds, Armstrong.

November 1984/COLOR PINUP: Rick Martel, Sgt. Slaughter, Von Erich, Road Warriors, Windham, Rotundo.

January 1985/COLOR PINUP: Tito Santana, Road Warriors, Billy Jack, Hayes, 1984 fan ballot.

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July 1985/COLOR PINUP: Sgt. Slaughter, Hogan vs. Piper, Warriors, One Man Gang, T.A., Martel.

September 1985/COLOR PINUP: Junkyard Dog, Magnum T.A., Von Erich, Hogan, AWA scouting reports.

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February 1986/COLOR PINUP: Nikita Koloff, Mike Von Erich, Warriors, Santana, Taylor, Barbarian, Race.



APRIL 1986

April 1986/COLOR PINUP: Ric Flair, Wendi Richter, Adams & Hernandez, Dusty & Warriors vs. Flair & Andersons.

May 1986/COLOR PINUP: Rick Steamboat, Road Warriors, Humongous, Bulldogs, Hansen vs. Martel.

June 1986/COLOR PINUP: Kevin Von Erich, Hulk Hogan, Adams, Duggan, Scott Hall.

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July 1987/COLOR PINUP: Midnight Rockers, Steamboat-Savage, Luger, Duggan, Garvins, Sting.

August 1987/COLOR PINUP: Jim Garvin & Precious, Hogan-Andre, Warriors, Windham-Flair, Gordy, Bigelow.

October 1987/COLOR PINUP: Ted DiBiase, Ric Flair, Williams, Rockers, Hogan vs. Steamboat, NWA & WWF.

November 1987/COLOR PINUP: George Steele, Nikita Koloff, Warriors, Harts, Hogan, Windham.

January 1988/COLOR PINUP: The Road Warriors, Ted DiBiase, Flair-Garvins, Hogan & Ventura, Zbyszko.

February 1988/COLOR PINUP: Ronnie Garvin, Randy Savage, Garvin-Flair, Von Erichs, Freebirds.

April 1988/COLOR PINUP: Rick Martel, Lex Luger, Flair-Garvin, Kerry, Survivor Series, Iron Sheik.

May 1988/COLOR PINUP: Sting, Andre, Valentine-Beefcake, Flair, Cornette, Owen Hart.

June 1988/COLOR PINUP: Tully Blanchard, Hulk Hogan, Muraco, Perez, Rockers, Bunkhouse Stampede.

July 1988/COLOR PINUP: Curt Hennig, Hogan vs. Andre, Express vs. Rockers, Beefcake, Perez, Rotundo-Sting.

August 1988/COLOR PINUP: Al Perez, Savage & Hogan, Gilbert-Lawler, Four Horsemen, Kerry Von Erich.

October 1988/COLOR PINUP: Ultimate Warrior, Sting, Savage, Lawler, Williams, Steamboat, Varsity Club.

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BY BOB SMITH

THE KING IS DEAD

WRESTLING HAS A bad habit of forgetting about its veteran stars. Other major sports see fit to honor veteran competitors with a special day, but wrestling never follows their lead (an occasional old-timers' battle royal is hardly sufficient). Last year, it seemed the entire city of Atlanta came out for Braves pitcher Phil Niekro's final appearance; fans across the country thrilled to the spectacular farewells for basketball's Julius Erving of the Philadelphia 76ers.

Nobody ever gave a day for Harley Race, but *somebody* should have. Truly great wrestlers are rare, but by the way the WWF handled the announcement of his retirement, you'd never know that Race was the holder of more titles than any other wrestler of his time.

Forget Bobby Heenan and the ridiculous "King" image he bestowed upon Race; remember Race the *man*. He was hated by most, but serious fans consider him to be one of the greatest competitors ever to step inside the ring.

"Handsome" Harley Race began his career in 1960, and he took his lumps like any other young wrestler. But the more experience he got, the more matches he won. Opponents tended to underestimate his talents (he never boasted an overly muscled bodybuilder's physique), and they usually ended up with another notch in the loss column.

Somewhere around 1965, Race became unbeatable. Every time you saw him, he would have a belt around his waist. The Kansas City native captured the prestigious Missouri State title seven times. He won the AWA World tag team title with Larry Hennig three times. Race became a master of virtually every hold known to man, and suddenly he was feared and respected by fans and opponents alike.

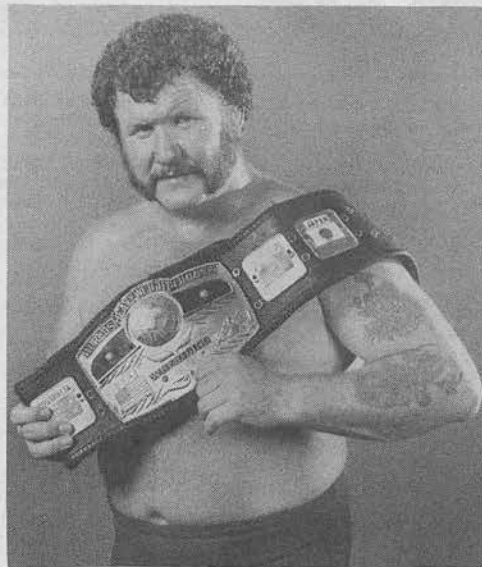
The finest period of his career had to be his unprecedented seven NWA World championships. For 10 years, from 1973 to 1983, Race was the NWA, always at the forefront either as champion or number-one contender. His title reigns and defenses twice earned him *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* Wrestler of the Year honors. Even when he lost the title for the final time to Ric Flair on June 10, 1983, Race was superb, perplexing his younger opponent in a grueling steel cage match. As always, he was a pleasure to watch.

Many were surprised when the veteran moved to the WWF in 1985, and some feared he would become lost on the federation's lengthy roster of stars. Bobby Heenan, however, saw the vast talents still alive in the aging competitor, and suddenly Race became "The King," soaring up the federation's top 10 rankings. He shocked *everybody* by winning the King of the Ring and Sam Muchnick Memorial tournaments in 1986. And in a year that would be dominated by stories about WWF champion Hulk Hogan's WrestleMania III war with Andre the Giant, it would be Race who would give Hogan his toughest title matches of 1987.

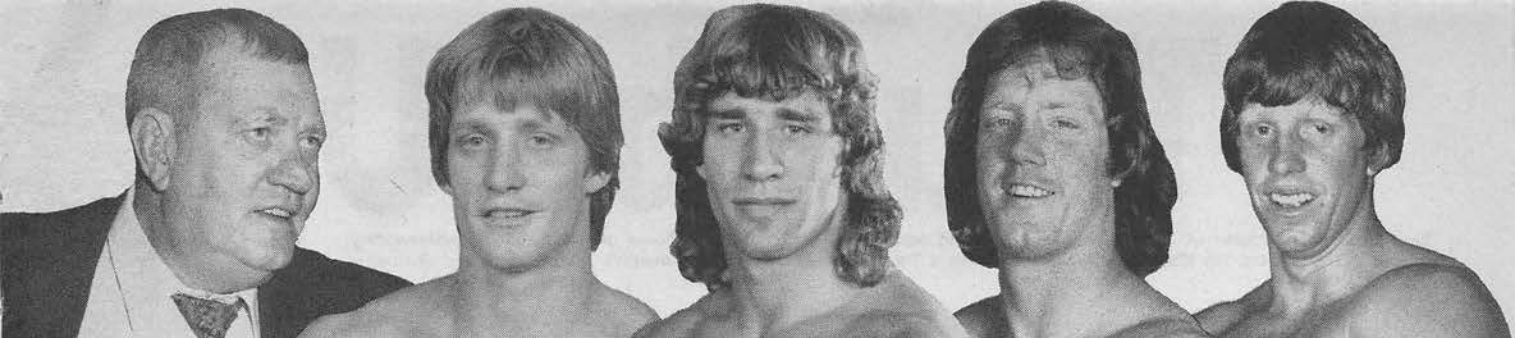
The end for Race came when he was forced out of action by abdominal surgery a few months ago. But instead of looking back at Race's incredible list of titles, Heenan chose to "coronate" a new king: Islander Haku.

This isn't surprising, since Heenan only seems to look after his own interests. But even the NWA seems to have forgotten that Race ever existed. If you want to get the *real* picture, look to the past to see why Race will go down in history as a legend. In an era featuring a host of bodybuilders and pretty faces, Race was the premier *wrestler* of his time.

He will be missed by those intelligent enough to know the difference. □

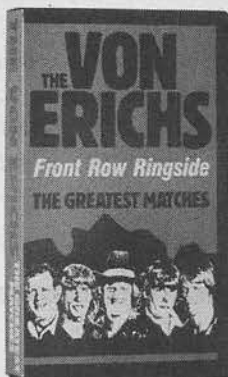


Seven-time NWA champion Harley Race



A VON ERICH EXTRAVAGANZA!

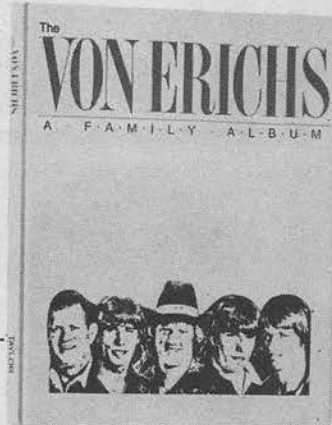
The Von Erich family has long been known as "The First Family Of Professional Wrestling." Now, a deluxe-quality videotape and collectors' edition hardcover book bring all the excitement, drama, tragedy, and triumph of the Von Erichs into your home!



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- Highlights of David Von Erich battling Jim Garvin, Kamala, and Harley Race.
- The entire May 6, 1984, bout in which Kerry Von Erich captured the NWA World title from Ric Flair at Texas Stadium in front of 43,518 fans.
- Highlights of Mike Von Erich's November 24, 1983, debut match against Gen. Skandor Akbar, and a battle against John Tatum.
- Rare footage of Chris Von Erich; Fritz vs. Joe Blanchard; David spanking Sunshine; six-man action featuring Mike, Lance, & Kevin, and David, Kevin, and Kerry; and Mike's hospitalization from toxic shock syndrome.

THE VON ERICHS: A FAMILY ALBUM is a magnificent history of the *entire* Von Erich family in words and pictures. Subtitled "Tragedies And Triumphs Of America's First Family Of Wrestling," the book chronicles Fritz, Doris, Kevin, David, Kerry, Mike, and Chris—plus rare photos of Jack—in over 100 black-and-white photographs and 32 pages of dazzling color photography. Many of these photos are from the Von Erich personal family scrapbooks (including many baby photos and school portraits) and have *never* been published anywhere—until now! This beautifully designed hardcover volume measures 8½x11 and is 128 pages in length. You'll be proud to add this to your personal library.



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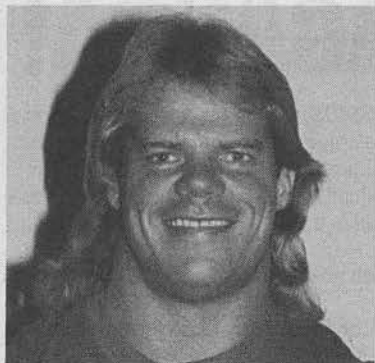
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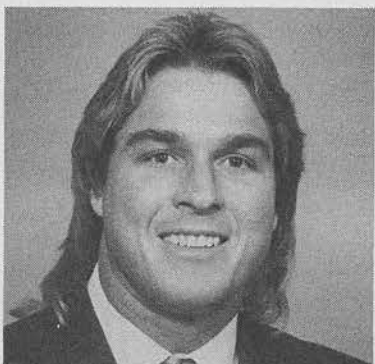
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Thumbs Up

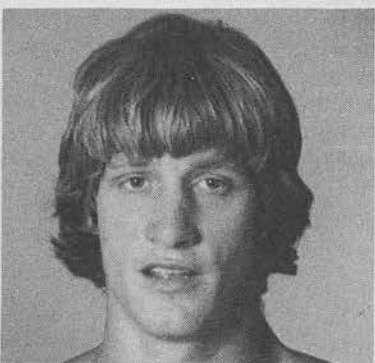
Each issue, *The Wrestler* will praise the noteworthy and damn those who violate the honor of wrestling. The praiseworthy receive a Thumbs Up, the disgraceful are marked with a Thumbs Down. Here is this month's roll of honor and shame.



Thumbs Up to Lex Luger. Lost in the controversy of the Baltimore physician's decision to end the Lex Luger-Ric Flair NWA title match was the fact that, for over 23 minutes, "The Total Package" wrestled the match of his life. Luger, who has never been known for his stamina or skills as a scientific wrestler, dominated Flair and never lost control of the match. It was a brilliant display of determination and courage by Luger, who showed that he only needs a little fine-tuning to become champion. Lex is on his way!



Thumbs Up to Terry Taylor. Will he get lost in the WWF shuffle or is Taylor's star about to shine the way people always thought it would? That's the question as this ring veteran embarks upon the most important stage of his career in the WWF. Taylor has always had the ability and, since becoming a rulebreaker last year, he's gained the killer instinct. He also has the work ethic necessary to climb the WWF ladder and reach the top. This will be a tough test, and Taylor deserves credit for taking this important and courageous step.

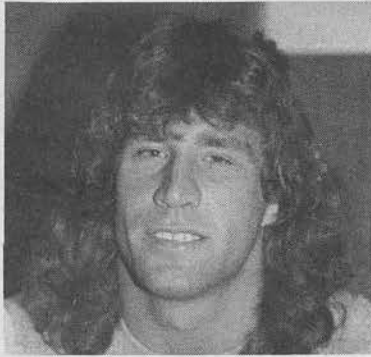


Thumbs Up to Kevin Von Erich. Once again, a wrestler has stepped forward to help someone in need. In this case, Kevin "wrestled" a special benefit match against two-year-old Jessica McClure, who last year made headlines with her 58-hour ordeal at the bottom of a 22-foot-deep well in Midland, Texas. The beneficiary of the bout: five-year-old Brennan Bolin of Lancaster, Texas, who was awaiting a heart-lung transplant. Too often, we hear about the greed of professional athletes. Not with Kevin, though. Bravo!

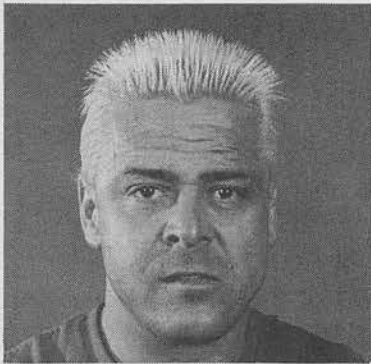


Thumbs Up to Austin Idol. He's been on the side of evil before. And it would have been so easy for him to succumb to evil once again. Paul E. Dangerously made him a lucrative offer to join "The Dangerous Alliance," and we wonder how many wrestlers would have turned him down. But Idol is no fool. He's seen how Dangerously operates. He knows that this cunning manager is never out for his wrestlers' gain. Idol also knows how good the fans' cheers sound and how satisfying it feels to *earn* something, instead of simply buying it.

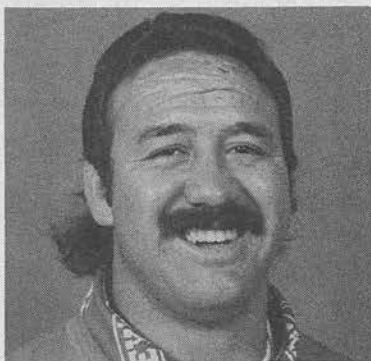
Thumbs Down



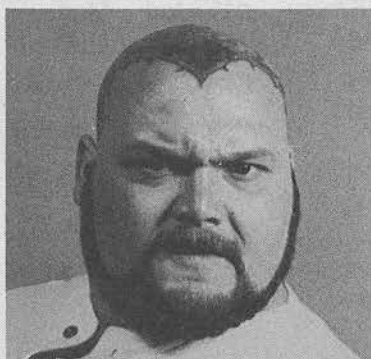
Thumbs Down to Kerry Von Erich. It appears as if Kerry and Michael Hayes have a give-and-take relationship: Hayes gives and Kerry takes. Much to our surprise, Kerry doesn't hesitate to rely on Hayes' help, but he is slow to offer it. In a recent match, the former Freebird was being brutalized by Iceman Parsons, Buddy Roberts, and Kamala. Hayes was in dire straits and badly needed help, but where was Kerry? Nowhere to be seen. Perhaps Hayes *was* better off with The Freebirds. Back then, he always knew where to turn when faced with trouble.



Thumbs Down to Ron Garvin. With his career on the decline and no title shots in sight, Garvin did the only thing a wrestler in his situation could do: turn against his friends. Why he did it makes no difference; the fact is that he ran into the ring during the Barry Windham-Dusty Rhodes U.S. title match at the July 10 Great American Bash in Baltimore and knocked out Dusty with his "Hands of Stone" punch. We expected more from Ron. We always thought Jim was the bad apple in the family, but Jim is now a model citizen; Ron is a bum!



Thumbs Down to Manny Fernandez. The song "That's What Friends Are For" must be painful to Wahoo McDaniel's ears. "That's what friends are for?" he must ask every time he hears it on his car stereo. "To tear up my beloved family heirloom?" And, of course, Wahoo now realizes that Manny Fernandez was *never* his friend. What kind of friend would attack this beloved Indian legend during an interview and tear up the sacred headdress that has been in Wahoo's family for generations? Only a slab of evil scum like Fernandez, who has no idea what friends are for.



Thumbs Down to Bam Bam Bigelow. *Bam bam, out go the lights* . . . on a potentially great career? Has the time come to sound the death-knell for Bam Bam Bigelow? He has proven during his two years in the sport that he can't stay in one federation for very long. First it was the CWA. Then it was World Class. Then it was Japan. Then it was the CWA again. Then Bigelow landed in the WWF, where he had a chance to achieve greatness. But now Bigelow is gone again, off to the Continental area. The instability continues. The career flounders. The wrestling world mourns. □

CORRESPONDENTS

REPORTS

San Antonio, TX (Correspondent—Andy Laudano): In the main event, Terry "Bamm Bamm" Gordy challenged World Class champion Kerry Von Erich. Kerry set the pace for the match when he shoved Gordy after a clean break. Gordy shoved back, and the match continued with a sense of restrained aggressiveness and the advantage seesawing back and forth.

Kerry tried to put Gordy in a figure-four leglock, but Gordy held Kerry's foot so he couldn't complete the hold. The Freebird was

fighting perhaps one of the best matches of his life and appeared to be on the verge of winning the title when Buddy Roberts, John Tatum, and Jack Victory ran in the ring and attacked both Gordy and Kerry. Roberts beat up on Kerry while Tatum and Victory jumped Gordy.

Suddenly, Michael Hayes and Shaun Simpson charged the ring and chased Roberts and his cronies back to the dressing room. Gordy wanted the match to continue; Kerry agreed to another 15 minutes. Hayes and Simpson said

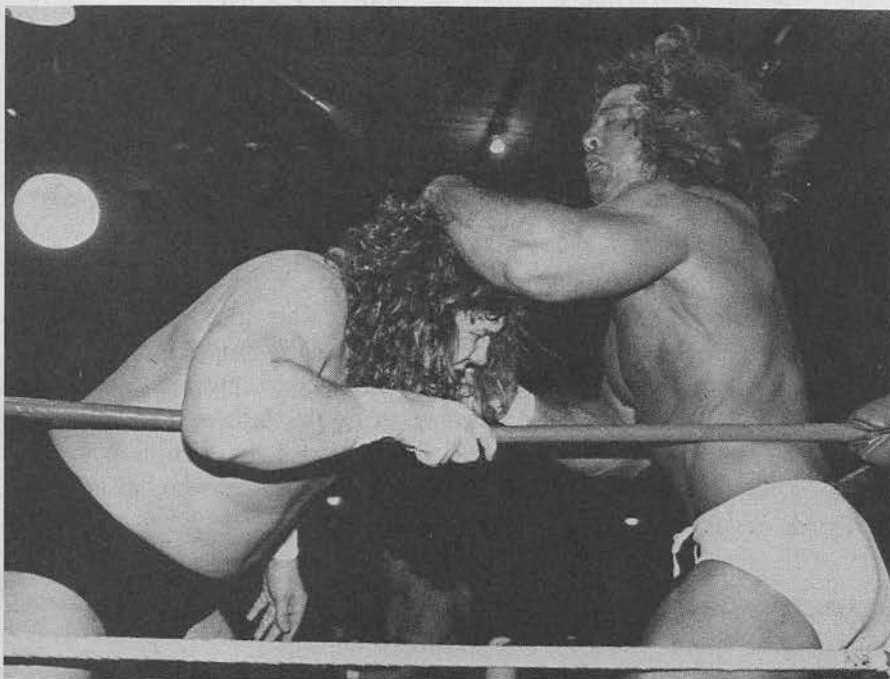
they would remain at ringside to watch the competitors' backs.

As the match continued, Gordy caught Kerry with his Asiatic spike and had rendered him nearly unconscious when Kerry reached up and put the iron claw on him. Gordy was able to throw Kerry to the ropes and clothesline him. Then he piledrived Kerry and went for the pin, but Kerry put his foot on the ropes. Gordy tried to piledrive him again, but Kerry was able to flip him over to the mat. Kerry then piledrived Gordy, but Gordy kicked out.

Both men tried unsuccessfully to pin each other a dozen times before the bell rang. Gordy sat in the ring frustrated while Hayes and Simpson congratulated Kerry, then walked over and patted Gordy on the back. Gordy got up and walked over to Kerry and offered to shake hands. Kerry shook and raised Gordy's hand in the air. Then all four men left the ring together.

In other bouts: AWA World champion Jerry Lawler defeated Iceman Parsons ... John Tatum & Jack Victory beat Steve Casey & Shaun Simpson ... Michael Hayes beat Buddy Roberts ... Eric Embry defeated Manuel Villalobos ... Kamala squashed Solomon Grundy & Rudy Gonzales.

(Continued on page 62)



Kerry Von Erich fights his way out of the corner against Terry Gordy in a San Antonio, Texas, bout that ended in a time-limit draw and with both men shaking hands.

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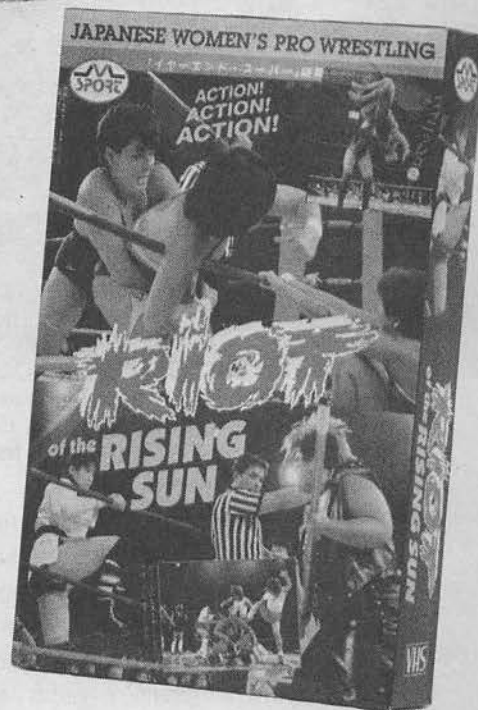
(running time: approximately 70 minutes)

- Wendi Richter & "Devil" Masami vs. Ayumi "Jumbo" Hori & Okumura
- Nancy Kumi vs. Lucy Kayama
- Monster Ripper & "Devil" Masami vs. Ayumi "Jumbo" Hori & Mimi Hagiwara
- "Jaguar" Rimi Yokota vs. Tarantula
- "Crush Girl" Lioness Asuka vs. "Crush Girl" Chigusa Nagayo

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Riot Of The Rising Sun

(running time: approximately 70 minutes)

- Yukari Omori & Ayumi "Jumbo" Hori vs. Noriyo Tatenos & Itsuki Yamasaki—"The Jumping Bomb Angels"
- Masked You & Kaoru "Dump" Matsumoto vs. Lioness Asuka & Chigusa Nagayo—"The Crush Girls"
- "Jaguar" Rimi Yokota vs. Las Galactia
- "Jaguar" Rimi Yokota vs. "Devil" Masami

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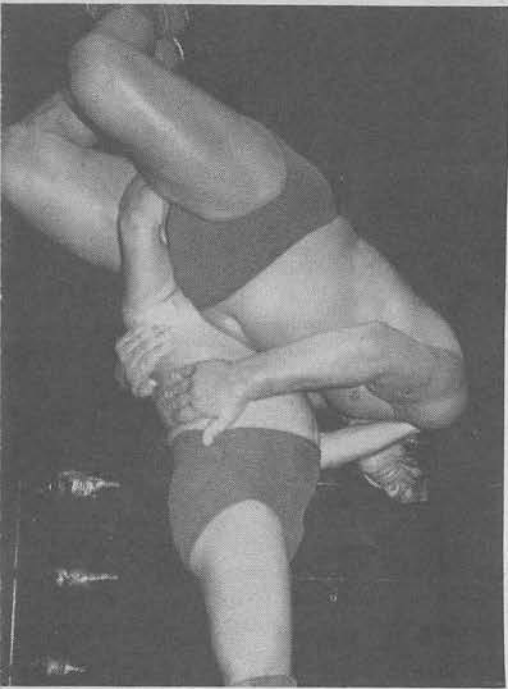
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October 1978 in Houston: Harley Race bodyslams Andre the Giant, disproving the WWF's claim that Hulk Hogan was the first to achieve that remarkable feat.

Q: "My question is for veteran scribe Matt Brock: The WWF says that Hulk Hogan was the first person ever to slam Andre the Giant. However, I've seen Kamala slam Andre on a recent *Legends of World Class* show. Who was *really* the first person to slam the Giant?"—Mark Sparks, Macon, GA

A: Brock answers: "That's why you can never believe the hype. You see, I was in Montreal in the early '70s when a grappler by the name of Don Leo Jonathan slammed the Giant more than once. Also, Harley Race, who claims to be the first to slam the Giant, did it in the late-'70s. If the WWF wants to continue to treat the fans like they don't know the history of the mat sport, that's fine. That only reflects on them; I know better."

Q: "My question is for The Road Warriors: Over a year ago in this space, you said that Demolition would never survive the year. How do you feel now that they're WWF World tag team champs?"—Scott Frenzel, Mayville, MI

A: Hawk answered first: "So, they're mopping up in a federation of tag team wimps! Big deal. They're *still*

YOU ASKED US

This is the monthly feature that answers **ALL** your most important questions about the mat sport, the stars, and the feuds. Send us your most perplexing queries and we'll have them answered for you by the world's finest grapplers and most insightful mat reporters. Address your questions to: **YOU ASKED US**, c/o **THE WRESTLER**, P.O. Box 48, Rockville Centre, NY 11571.

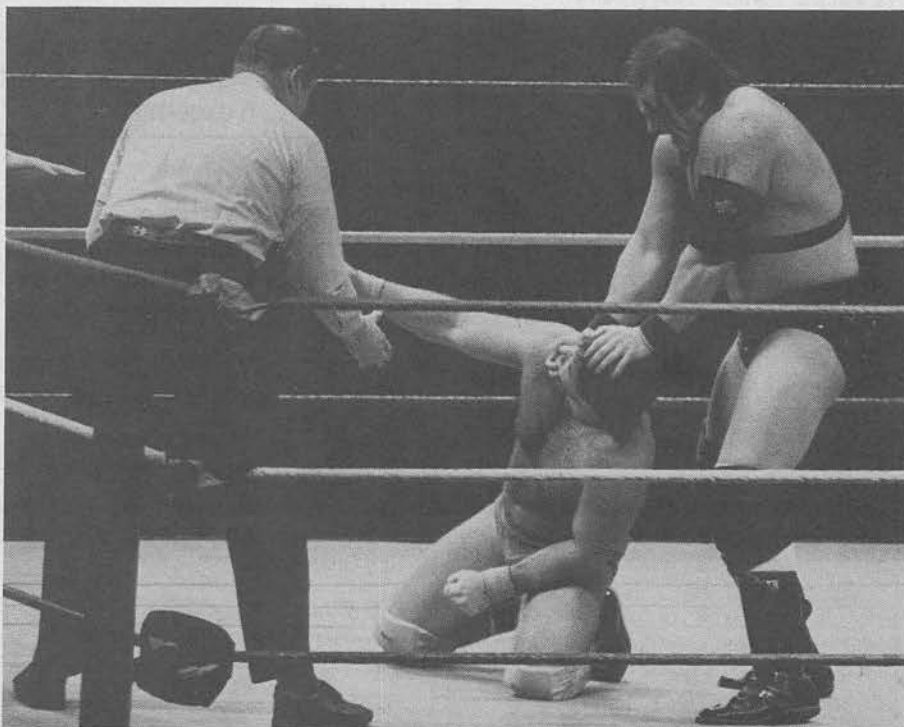
the imitators! *We're the original.*" Animal joined in: "That's right. The WWF has no talent. We ran The Flowers of Pain out of the NWA and immediately they beat Demolition in a non-title match!"

That tells you all you have to know about Demolition."

Q: "My question is for the editors of *The Wrestler*: Who do you think can beat Tully Blanchard and Arn Anderson for the NWA World heavyweight tag team championship?"—Bobby Umo, Honolulu

A: Assistant Editor Gersh Kuntzman answered: "I study the tag team scene very closely, and I'm convinced that no one can beat Tully and Arn when the title is on the line. Sure, Luger and Sting successfully achieved a pinfall victory over the champs at the Crockett Cup tourney, but there was no title to be won or lost. Now, I'm not saying that the Horsemen like to lose, but in non-title bouts they're just a good tag team; when the belt is up for grabs, however, they exhibit a passion for competition that I've rarely seen. Plus, they get great help from J.J. Dillon and the other Horsemen. I'm sure their title reign will be a long one."

Q: "I'd like to direct my question at Steve 'Dr. Death' Williams: Steve, do you still keep in contact with (Continued on page 63)"



Demolition Smash twists Raymond Rougeau's head. Now competing in the WWF, Demolition was run out of the NWA by The Road Warriors; Hawk and Animal are proud of that.



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January 1983/Stories include: Putski, Muraco, Windham, Bockwinkel.

February 1983/Stories include: Bockwinkel, Backlund, Rich, Kamala.

April 1983/Stories include: Rhodes, Tiger Mask, Sammartino, Bundy.

May 1983/Stories include: Samoans, Von Erich, Rhodes, Orndorff.

June 1983/Stories include: Windham, Martel, Brody, Andre.

October 1983/Stories include: Race, Sawyer, Brisco, Bass.

November 1983/Stories include: Rhodes, Santana, Von Erichs, Kabuki.

December 1983/Stories include: Mascaras, Superstar, Von Erich, Zbyszko.

January 1984/Stories include: Valentine, Hogan, Von Erich, Road Warriors.

March 1984/Stories include: Santana, Hogan, Von Erich, Sawyers.

April 1984/Stories include: Hogan, Ellering, Von Erich, Rhodes.

May 1984/Stories include: Windham, Brody, Road Warriors, Junkyard Dog.

June 1984/Stories include: Von Erich, Billy Jack, Flair, Armstrong.

July 1984/Stories include: Rich, Billy Jack, Valiant, Von Erich.

August 1984/Stories include: Garvin, Sullivan, Freebirds, Street.

September 1984/Stories include: Von Erich, Piper, Steamboat, Billy Jack.

October 1984/Stories include: Flair, Rhodes, Magnum T.A., Bundy.

November 1984/Stories include: Billy Jack, Von Erich, Piper, Brody.

December 1984/Stories include: Martel, Santana, Von Erich, Steamboat.

January 1985/Stories include: Von Erich, Warriors, Albano, Koloffs.

February 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Santana, Billy Jack, Nikita Koloff.

March 1985/Stories include: Slaughter, Warriors, Martel, Rude.

April 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Von Erich-Adams, Flair, Tonga & Snuka.

May 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Backlund, Santana, Rich.

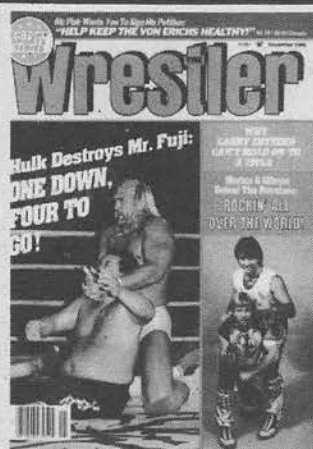
June 1985/Stories include: Rhodes, Windham, Rich, Hogan.

July 1985/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Reed, Martel, Sunshine.

August 1985/BONUS 4-PG. COLOR SECTION! Plus: Warriors, Magnum T.A., Sheik & Volkoff, McGraw.

September 1985/Stories include: Hogan, Von Erich, Savage, R&R Express.

October 1985/Stories include: Flair, Windham, Shultz, Martel.



NOVEMBER 1985

November 1985/Stories include: Hogan, Zbyszko, R&R Express, Von Erichs.

December 1985/Stories include: Rude, Fantastics, Muraco, Uncle Elmer.

January 1986/20th Anniversary Issue! 10 Greatest Wrestlers, Rhodes, Hogan, Sammartino.

February 1986/Stories include: Hogan, Orndorff, Flair, Hansen.

March 1986/Stories include: Von Erich, Duggan, Hansen-Martel.

April 1986/Stories include: Von Erich, Rude, Luger, Hogan, Magnum T.A.

May 1986/Stories include: Zbyszko, Von Erichs, Santana-Ventura, Hillbillies.

June 1986/Stories include: Luger, Hernandez, Flair-Bockwinkel, Hogan, T.A.

July 1986/Stories include: King Kong Bundy, Koloff vs. Graham, Ric Flair.

August 1986/Stories include: Snuka, Bulldogs, Freebirds, Warriors, Duggan.

September 1986/Stories include: Fantastics, Adonis, Morton-Flair, Brody.

October 1986/Stories include: Nikita-Magnum, Nord, Bruno, Kerry, Windham.

November 1986/Stories include: R&R Express, Hogan-Orndorff, Von Erich.

December 1986/Stories include: Flair, Bockwinkel, Hogan, Gilbert, Nikita.

January 1987/Stories include: Heenan, Garvins, DiBiase, Borne & Sawyer.

February 1987/Stories include: Magnum T.A., Gordy, Steamboat-Roberts.

March 1987/Stories include: Windham, Nikita, Adias, Savage-Steamboat.

April 1987/Stories include: Hogan, Luger, Rich-Lawler, R&R Express.

May 1987/Stories include: Flair-Nikita, Andre-Hogan, UWF, Windham, Hennig.

June 1987/Stories include: Flair-Windham, Can-Ams, Rhodes-Murdoch.

July 1987/Stories include: Cornette, Hyatt, Luger, Harts, Adams, Hansen.

August 1987/Stories include: Can-Ams, Luger vs. Nikita, Fantastics, Koko, Nord.

September 1987/Stories include: Koloffs, Harts, Duggan, Hennig, Hart.

October 1987/Stories include: Savage-Honky Tonk, Horsemen, Patera, Kerry.

November 1987/Stories include: Williams, Luger, Hogan-Khan, Rich.

December 1987/Stories include: Hogan, Windham, Lawler, Flair, Beefcake.

January 1988/Stories include: Nikita-Taylor, Warriors, DiBiase-Duggan.

February 1988/Stories include: Flair, Andre-Hogan, New Breed, Kerry.

March 1988/Stories include: Hogan, Luger-Sting, Calgary, Demolition.

April 1988/Special Issue! Starrcade '87, Survivor Series, AWA & World Class.

Also: Strike Force, Luger, Rockers.

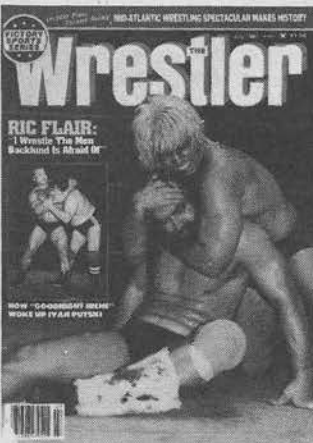
May 1988/Stories include: Horsemen, Hogan, Flair, Fantastics, DiBiase.

June 1988/Stories include: Sting-Flair, DiBiase, Kerry, Nikita, Zenk.

July 1988/Stories include: Fantastics, Hogan, Windham, McMahon, Rich.

August 1988/Stories include: Savage, Windham-Luger split, Demolition, Lawler, Ellering.

September 1988/Stories include: Duggan vs. Andre, Hogan, Windham.



JULY 1983

July 1983/Stories include: Flair, Adonis, Sullivan, Zbyszko.

August 1983/Stories include: Valentine, Blanchard, Windham, Street.

September 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Ellering, Von Erich, Brisco.

THE WRESTLER

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INTRODUCING TOM BRANDI

IF SOMEONE WERE to do a demographic study of CWA fans, they'd discover there are more young females attending the matches than there used to be.

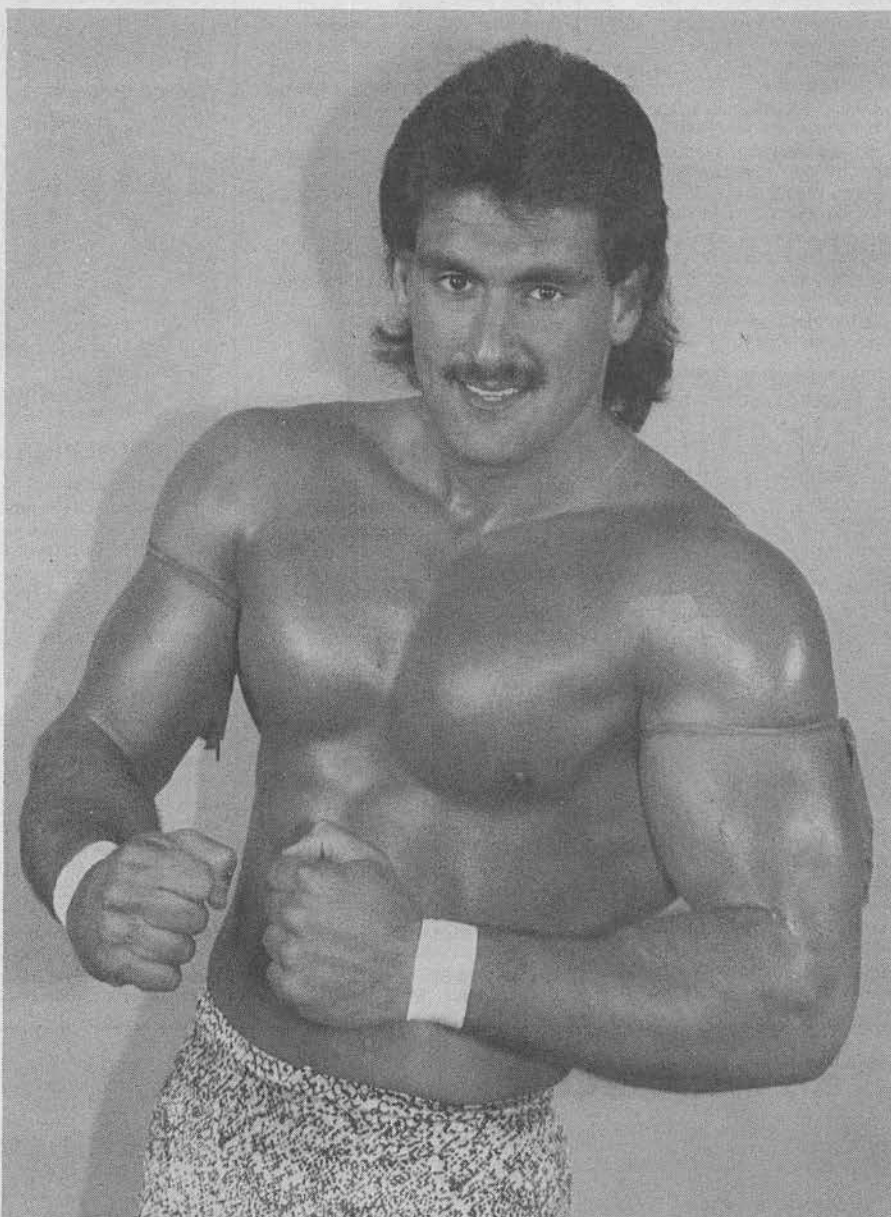
CWA promoters can thank Tom Brandi for that.

Brandi is a former member of the world-famous Chippendale's male revue, and he's proud of the time he spent entertaining ladies of all ages. But he's not taking his efforts in the mat sport as lightly, and he insists that his recent success has come from a lot of hard work.

"I worked at Chippendale's in New York for six months," recalled Brandi. "That stint worked out well for me, because I did a lot of working out to keep my body in top shape for dancing. And I've found that my revue dancing has actually given me a leg up on my opponents in terms of flexibility and agility. 1988 has been a great year for me. I'm winning more matches than ever before. Even though women seem to love me, guys naturally can be a little jealous, so it's up to me to prove that I can *wrestle*, too."

It's been a long, hard road to prominence for this handsome young Philadelphian. He received training from Mike Kaluha, another promising young star, but it

(Continued on page 58)



Muscular Tom Brandi received his first taste of the public spotlight as a Chippendale's dancer. Now wrestling in the CWA, the 6'2", 231-pound powerhouse is working diligently to establish himself as a top-flight athlete—and he's succeeding!

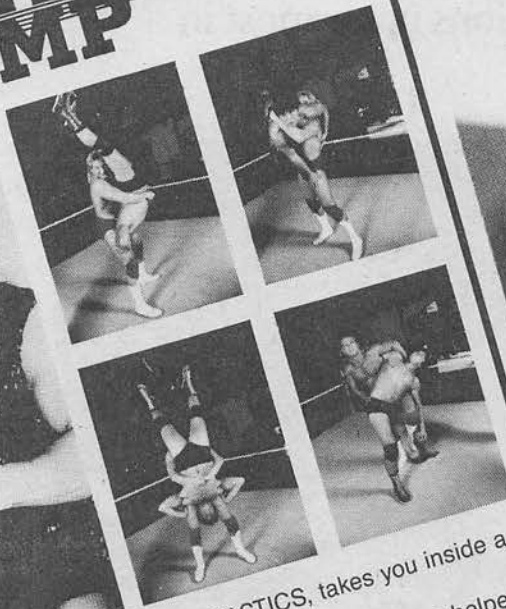
Tom Brandi knows how to thrill a crowd—and not just a wrestling crowd. At one time a Chippendale dancer, Brandi has retired his G-string to embark on a career as a professional wrestler. He has conquered the odds—and a few big-name opponents—to become quite a star in the CWA

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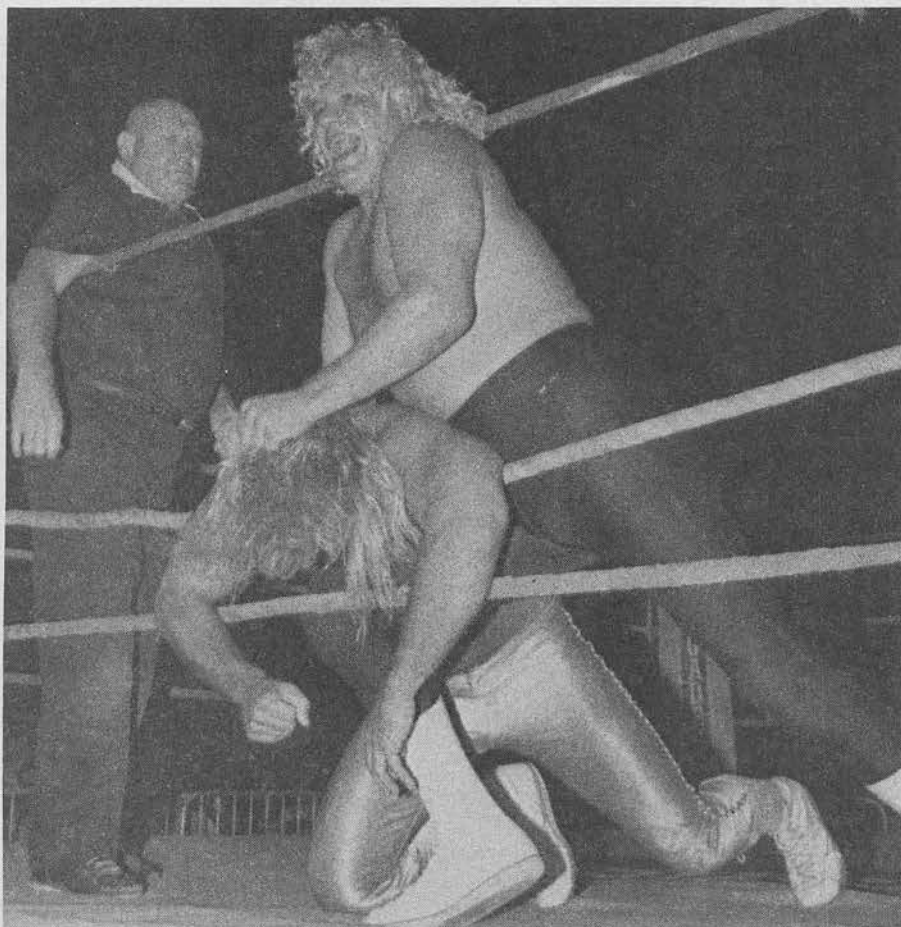
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Q&A

Each month, *The Wrestler* will present a "Question and Answer" forum with an important figure in the wrestling world. It is your chance to meet wrestling's biggest stars as they answer the questions uppermost in the fans' minds



Buddy Roberts chokes Michael Hayes against the ring rope as the warring Freebirds take their feud to Memphis. Roberts, who says he once loved Hayes like a brother, has sworn to destroy his former partner.

Q: Buddy, it seems like it's you against the world, or at least you against the other two Freebirds. Are you sorry about the way things have turned out?

A: Sorry? What the hell do I have to be sorry about? Why should I worry that Michael and Terry have turned into the two most evil men in Texas?

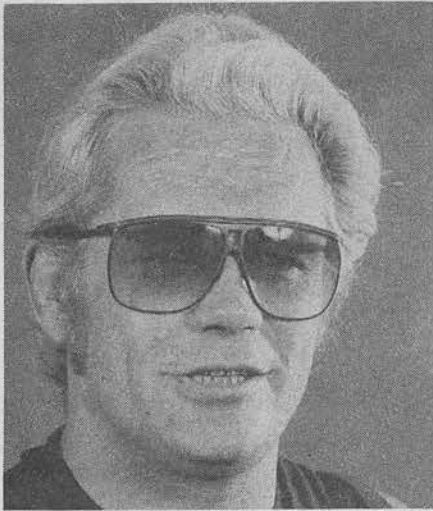
Q: Evil? It seems to me that *you're* the one who's been committing the most vicious acts in World Class. What's the idea of this black glove you've been wearing?

A: First of all, if you want any kind of an interview at all, you'll keep those nasty comments to yourself, you Yankee slob. I don't care if you like my style or not, and that includes my "Black Beauty." A few months ago, Hayes and Kerry Von Erich double-teamed me during a match in Alaska . . .

Q: Alaska? I never heard of World Class sanctioning matches in Alaska.

A: What's so strange about that? Anyway, Hayes, a man I once loved like a brother, and that Von Erich loser jumped me and intentionally brutalized my hand. That's why I'm wearing this protective glove, and that's why nobody saw the vicious act against me, because . . . because there ain't no TV tapings in Alaska. That's when I knew I should have nothing more to do with Hayes, and as far as

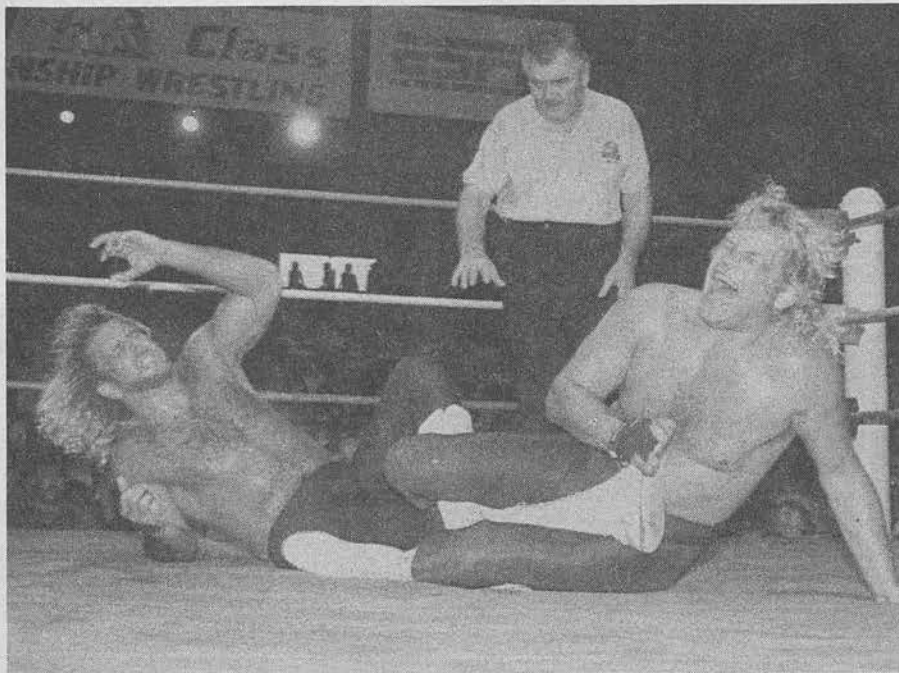
BUDDY ROBERTS



WILL THE FEUD among the members of The Fabulous Freebirds ever die? Ask Buddy Roberts and he'll say, "Yes, when I've driven the other two out of Texas." Roberts has dedicated himself to that goal ever since Michael Hayes, and later Terry Gordy, entered into an alliance with The Freebirds' traditional enemies, the Von Erchs. The feud came to a head when Roberts interfered in two matches during the May 8 Parade of Champions at Texas Stadium. First, Roberts got involved in the Triple Dome of Terror match pitting Gordy against Hayes. Later in the card, he disrupted a tag team match pitting Gordy and Steve Simpson against Jack Victory and John Tatum. Roberts brought his "Freebird hair cream" to the ring, which found its way into Simpson's eyes. Since then, Gordy and Roberts have been bitter enemies.

At this point, Roberts may be the most dangerous man in World Class. He's become an advisor to The Samoan Swat Team, and he's aligned himself with Iceman Parsons and Gen. Skandor Akbar. Their targets? Hayes and Gordy, of course!

Assistant Editor Bob Smith flew to Dallas to speak with Roberts, who usually refuses to be interviewed by print journalists.



Hayes cries out in pain as Roberts shrieks from the exertion of clamping down the figure-four leglock. An underrated scientific wrestler, Roberts' feud with Hayes finds him wrestling with a new enthusiasm.

both in the ring and in the pocketbook.

Q: You must think I'm stupid. I've never heard you sing a note in your life. I don't think you've had *anything* to do with Hayes' musical success.

A: You're wrong about my musical talents, but you're right about one thing—I *do* think you're stupid. You can hear my great songs and my fabulous singing all over *Off The Streets*, so if you don't want to end up with a cowboy boot in the butt, you'll watch your lyin' mouth.

Q: Speaking of lying, Hayes, Gordy, and the Von Erchs claim that you load that ominous glove of yours. In fact, you pinned Hayes after just *one* shot to the head during a recent match in Dallas. I've never seen you knock out anybody with one punch before.

A: That's because I've never been so fired up before. I've never wanted to end the careers of anybody like I want to do away with Hayes, Gordy, and those Von Erch mama's boys. Hayes can cry and moan all he wants about my glove being loaded, but he knows in his heart that he was simply beaten by a better man. None of those guys can match my natural talents and abilities in that ring. For over 20 years I've dominated this sport, but the feud with those losers makes me feel like a kid again. Plus, the

I'm concerned, I'm through with Gordy, too. I've kicked 'em out of The Freebirds.

Q: What? How can you kick the founding members of The Freebirds out of their own group?

A: Wait a minute. *I'm* the original Freebird. I have the right to hire and fire anybody I want from wrestling's most elite organization. I'm the only *true* original Freebird, and now the official Freebirds are Iceman, Tafuli, and Samu. These are the *real* Freebirds. Gordy is just a forgotten memory. But listen, I'm not through with Hayes in a

different arena. My lawyer has served his lawyer with papers because Hayes has made me lose a great deal of income.

Q: Because of the injury?

A: Naw, because his failure to provide royalties, you rube. Hayes would never admit to it, but it was *me* who wrote all of the songs on his hit *Off The Streets* album. I also sang, played guitar, bass, and keyboards, but I got no credit on the record sleeve and no royalty checks in the mail. I'm suing him for the financial losses I've suffered, but in the end it'll be *Hayes* that suffers,

Iceman has assured me that we can win the tag belts, too, 'specially since Kevin and Kerry Von Clodhopper now hold 'em.

Q: Seems like Iceman is your best friend in the sport right now.

A: For once you tell the truth. Me and Iceman are an unbeatable combination. My best day of the year was when he cleanly pinned that horseface Kerry Von Erich for the World Class title. Of course, the officials practically handed the belt back to Von Erich at the Parade of Champions, but now the whole world knows what a great wrestler Parsons is. He's my main man, and together we're gonna raise all kinds of hell, baby.

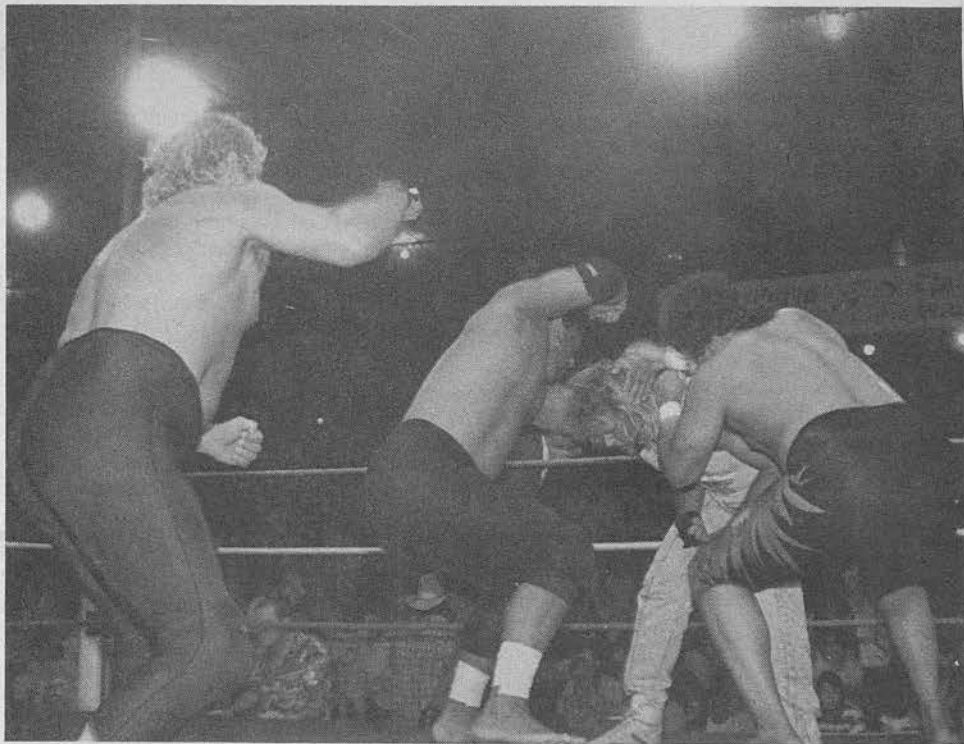
Q: What are your plans for the Samoan Swat Team?

A: Hey, these guys are *awesome*. They've only been here in World Class for a couple of months, but when I saw them beat the packings out of a couple of preliminary bums a few weeks ago, I knew I had to get involved with these incredible athletes. The best thing I like about 'em is that they'll do anything to win a match. You know, with me offering them my guiding hand it'll be no time at all before they put a pasting on those Von Erich jerks.

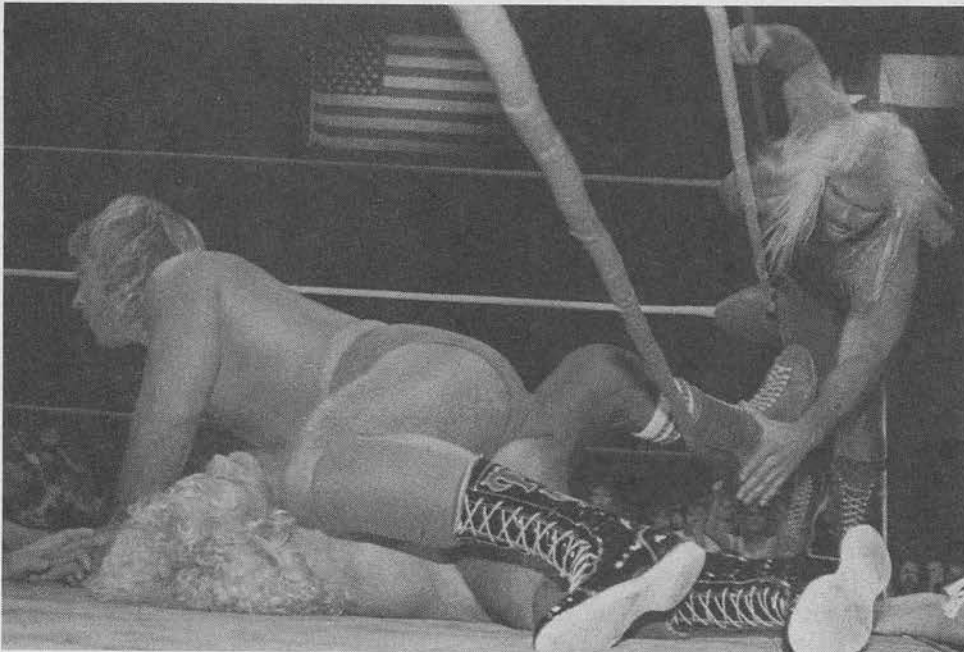
Q: You've also been assisting Gen. Skandor Akbar in recent matches involving Kamala. It seems there isn't a rulebreaker in World Class you haven't been involved with lately.

A: Hey, I'm just keeping my options open. Since my former friends are now on speaking terms with Von Erich slime, I'm trying my hardest to raise holy hell whenever a Von Erich is wrestling *anywhere* against *anyone*, and I'm not gonna rest until those former Freebirds are history, too.

Q: I've been watching this feud very closely ever since you returned to World Class earlier this year. I can safely say that it was *you* who started everything, and it was *you* who turned Gordy against Hayes in



The Samoan Swat Team gangs up on Hayes as Roberts directs the attack (above). The animosity between Hayes and Roberts is a far cry from the cooperation they used to display. A typical example is demonstrated as Hayes drapes Roberts' foot on the ropes to avoid a pinfall at the hands of Terry Taylor in a February 1987 bout in Texas (below).



the first place! All because of your irrational hatred for the Von Erichs. If you ask me, Hayes and Gordy have finally come to their senses.

A: You're full of beans, man. Anyone with any smarts can plainly see that the Von Erichs have to be erased from the sport at any cost. They're nothin' but a cancer on World Class that's been allowed to grow for too long. It was just two years ago that Michael and Terry

felt the same way I do about those bums, but now they've been brainwashed by Fritz Von Erich and these hayseed fans down here. Over the last few weeks I've proven who the best wrestler in World Class is, and that's yours truly. If I can drive the Von Erichs and the former Freebirds out of Texas, I'll be the one left holding all the titles. Even a slug like you knows that that's where the money is.

Q: Sure. You'll win those titles even if you have to use that Freebird hair cream to do it. I'm sure Steve Simpson hasn't forgotten about you, either.

A: Simpson can go to blazes. What happened to him at the Parade of Champions was an accident, pure and simple. I just came out to give Jack Victory and John Tatum some advice, and some of the goop just happened to get into Simpson's eyes . . . by *mistake*. As far as I'm concerned, though, I'm *glad* I helped get rid of Simpson. He's a friend of the Von Erichs. Any friend of the Von Erichs deserves at *least* that much. I'm sorry I didn't put him out of action permanently.

Q: I'm sorry that you haven't gained the maturity that Michael and Terry have. The Freebirds were one of the greatest trios in wrestling history. Can't you see how your actions have divided the team, perhaps irreparably?

A: It's not *me* that split up the team, idiot. It was Terry and Michael who decided to become Von Erich supporters. You know, you're just like the fans out there. Everybody figured when I kicked those other guys out that I would just fade away. But now, with Iceman, The Samoans, Akbar, Victory, Tatum, Black Bart, and Kamala, the seeds have been planted for a new era in World Class. Jerks like you can come down from New York and try to put the badmouth on everything I'm doin', but even a marshmallow like you has to admit that I'm still on top.

Q: I suppose so. I *do* thank you for this interview, and it may sound strange for me to say it, but I hope you haven't bitten off more than you can chew this time.

A: Don't waste your time worryin' about Buddy Roberts. Believe me, you haven't seen anything from me yet, and neither have Terry and Michael. I'm not gonna rest until they're a done deal. That I promise you. ☐

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SPOT LIGHTS...

From time to time, *The Wrestler* will shine its spotlight on an outstanding wrestler, manager, or tag team. These are unforgettable highlights of the sport's greatest stars, compiled by the largest staff of editors and photographers in wrestling journalism

BARRY WINDHAM

ONE YEAR AGO, few could have predicted that Barry Windham would become a member of the infamous Four Horsemen. Windham had always been a beacon of honor and integrity in a sport too often lacking such qualities. His decision to turn against Lex Luger and side with Ric Flair and company left many wrestling fans worried. After all, if someone like Windham can turn, what is to prevent Hulk Hogan, Sting, or Kerry Von Erich from doing the same?

Windham spent his early years laboring in the shadow of his father, Blackjack Mulligan; indeed, Windham wrestled early on as Blackjack Mulligan Jr. His triumphs included winning the Florida title from Dory Funk Jr. in 1981, but he had to forfeit the belt because of an auto accident that left him unable to defend the title. After Windham recovered, he received several title shots against then-NWA World champion Harley Race.

Soon, Mulligan Jr. became dismayed by his father's rulebreaking and changed his name back to Barry Windham. He beat Greg Valentine in the final round of a tournament to become the Southern champion, and got some of his first matches against NWA World champion Ric Flair. For his efforts, he was voted 1982's "Most Improved Wrestler" by the readers of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated*.

After reuniting with his father, Windham met Mike Rotundo and began a fruitful three-year partnership.



Blackjack Mulligan poses with his son Barry Windham, who used the name Blackjack Mulligan Jr. early in his career.

They were two-time U.S. tag team champions in Florida and seemed on their way to capturing the NWA World tag title when they switched to the WWF late in 1984. It wasn't long before they beat Adrian Adonis and Dick Murdoch for the WWF belts; they soon lost them to The Iron Sheik and Nikolai Volkoff at the first *WrestleMania* in 1985.

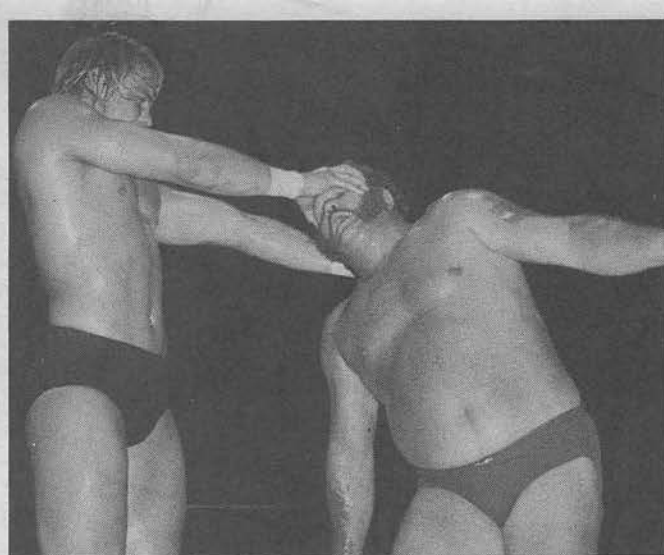
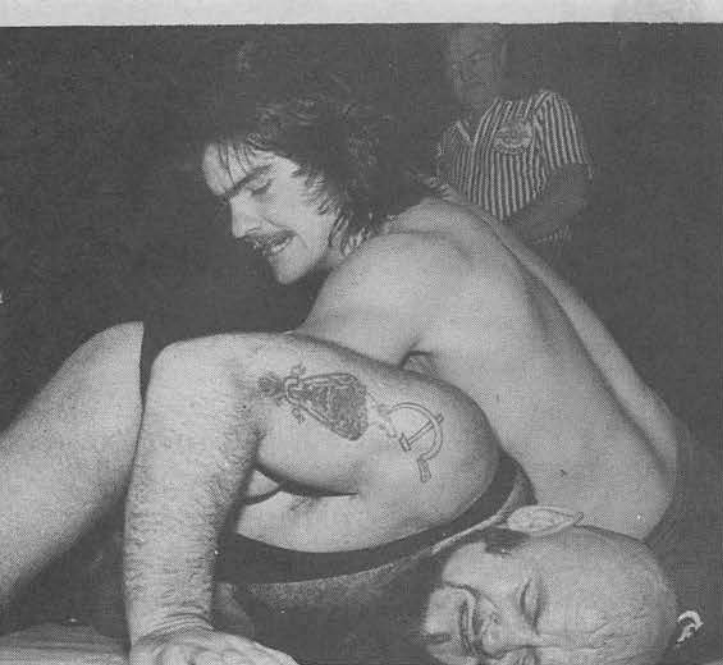
Windham and Rotundo regained the belts, but only briefly, as two months later they lost the title to Greg Valen-

tine and Brutus Beefcake. Disgruntled, Windham left the WWF and returned to Florida, where he encouraged the career of his younger brother Kendall. It was also around this time that Windham met Lex Luger. They feuded violently, then teamed up to fight Oliver Humperdink and his stable.

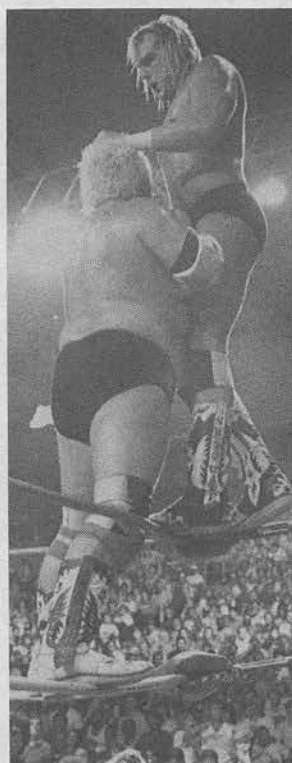
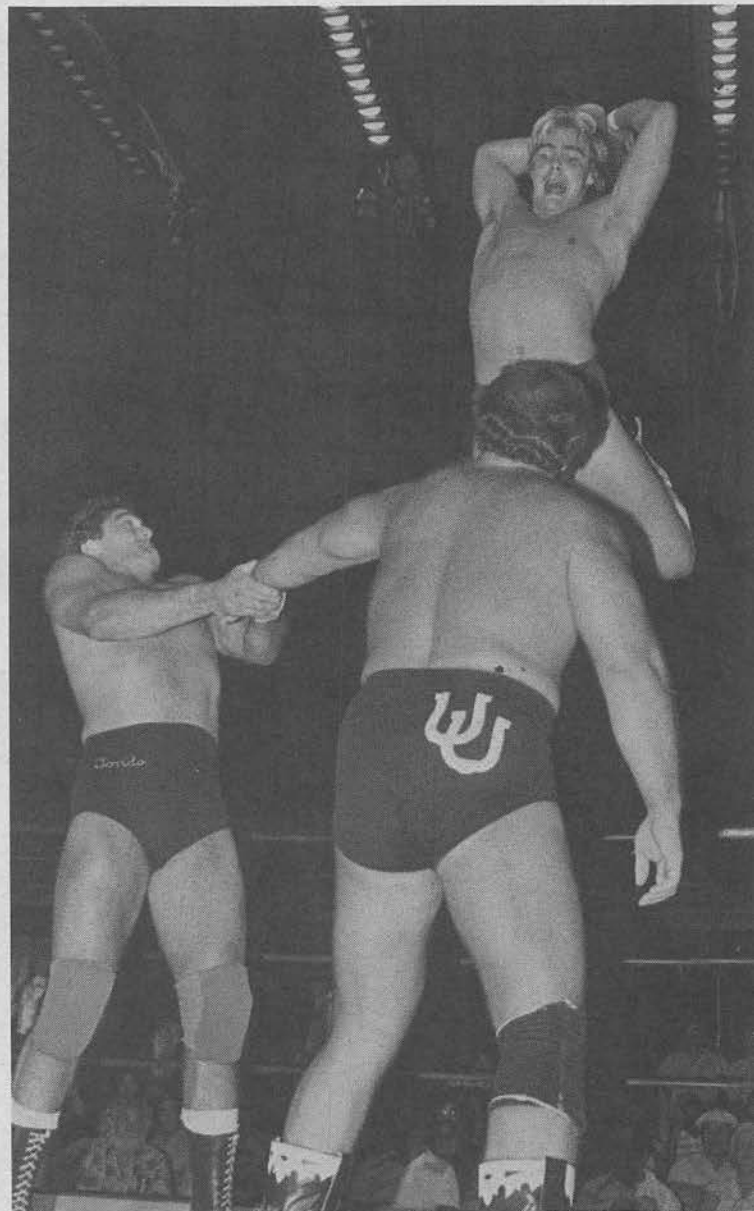
When Luger entered the NWA to begin his association with the Horsemen, Windham was there, begging him not to join. He didn't succeed. Deciding to concentrate on his own career, he came very close to winning the NWA World title from Ric Flair. Not to be discouraged, Windham entered the Western States title tournament and won the belt with a final-round victory over Black Bart in June 1987.

A seven-month reign ended with a controversial loss to Larry Zbyszko in January 1988. Flair then tempted Windham with an offer to join the Horsemen, but instead he teamed with Luger again and they won the NWA World tag team title from Tully Blanchard and Arn Anderson. But Flair's offer remained on his mind; three weeks later he was a Horseman. On May 13 in Houston, Windham defeated Nikita Koloff in a tournament final for the U.S. title—a title he has successfully defended through the 1988 Great American Bash.

As Windham moves through this dramatic new phase of his career, *The Wrestler* felt it was time to examine some professional highlights of this remarkable mat star. □



Windham (then Mulligan Jr.) holds Ivan Koloff on the mat (left). In early 1983, Windham's clawhold wasn't enough to help him defeat then-NWA champion Harley Race (above). Windham executes a remarkable bridge out from a Ric Flair pin attempt (below left).



Windham corners Black Bart on the way to victory in the Western States title tournament (left), and is cornered by Dusty Rhodes during the 1988 Great American Bash in Baltimore (above left). Longtime tag partner Mike Rotundo aids Barry's flying axhandle against Ron Bass (above right).

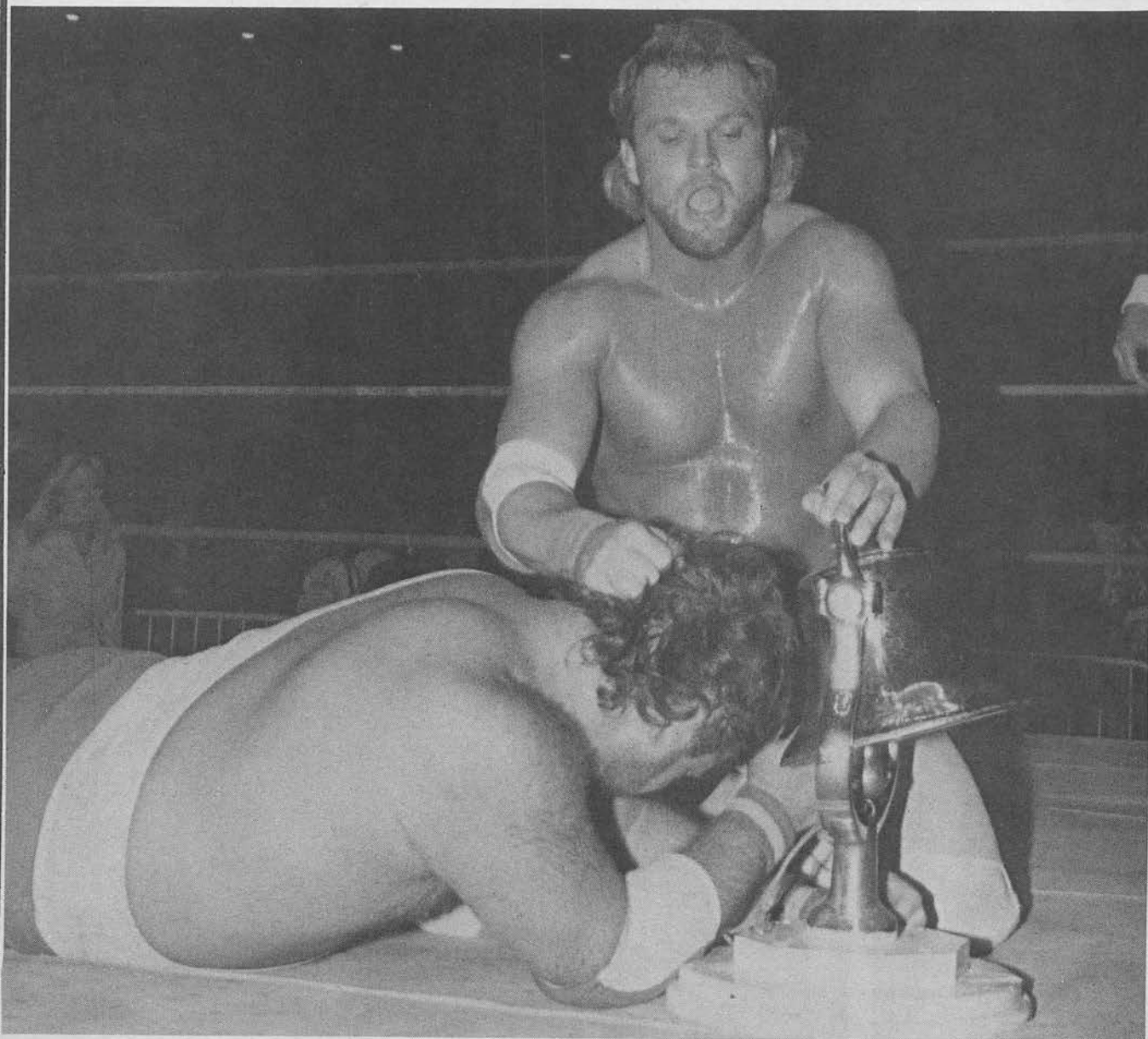
THE WRESTLER PANEL EXAMINES

RAY



EDDIE GILBERT

Each month
THE WRESTLER'S panel of experts
will offer their candid opinions of one
of wrestling's stars. Whether an up-and-coming
youngster or an established superstar in his own right,
our panel will always be frank and honest without fear of reprisal



Eddie Gilbert uses the timekeeper's bell as a weapon in his war against Jerry Lawler. Gilbert's ring style has become more violent over the past few years, and often involves the use of fire. It's not for nothing he's known as "Hot Stuff."



CAPT. LOU ALBANO

"Eddie's a perfect example of a homicidal maniac with schizophrenic tendencies, which means he's got a brain the size of a dehydrated pea. When he was in the WWF a few years ago, he acted like a good kid. But lately, in the CWA and Continental areas, he's been the most vicious wrestler of the year. The thing that gets me is that when he wrestles in the Southern Championship area, he acts *nice* again. If you ask me, he's *nuts!*"

Capt. Lou Albano, long known as "The Guiding Light," has guided 13 tag teams to an unmatched 16 WWF World tag team titles.



LARRY HENNIG

"You know, if you compare the careers of Gilbert and my boy Curt, you'll see they're pretty similar. They both started out as scientific wrestlers, but they saw the errors of their ways before too long. They both have great fathers, too, because Tommy Gilbert is almost as big a legend as I am. I'm glad to see a true gentleman like Eddie doing so well in so many areas. Maybe he'll team up with Curt sometime soon. Man, what a tag team *that* would be!"

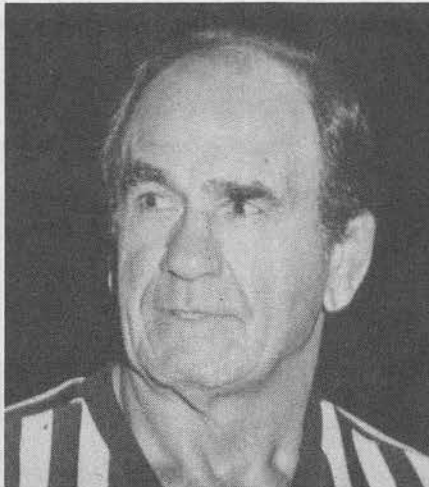
Larry "The Ax" Hennig is a four-time former AWA World tag team champion; he held three of those titles with Harley Race.



KILLER KOWALSKI

"The perfect example of not being able to judge a book by its cover. He's only 5'10" and 222 pounds, but pound-for-pound he's one of the toughest men in this business. If you try to wrestle scientifically, he'll beat you. If you insult his friends or family, he'll burn you. He'll stop at nothing to get whatever he wants, and despite his smaller size, he's a real man. Want proof? Just take a good look at Missy Hyatt!"

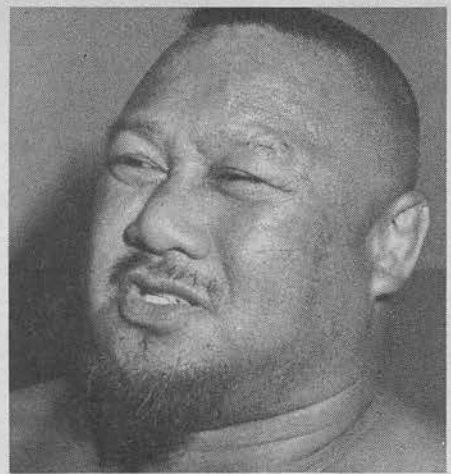
Killer Kowalski, one of the most sadistic rulebreakers in the sport's history, runs a wrestling school in Reading, Massachusetts.



LOU THESZ

"Another sad case of wasted potential. Eddie Gilbert started his pro career when he was only 18 years of age, and his stirring scientific victories stood for everything that was good about wrestling. Now, he's nothing but an example of what's gone wrong with the sport. His tactics of throwing fire and sneak-attacking his enemies would have earned him a suspension back in my day. But today he's considered a superstar. There's a lesson to be learned there."

Lou Thesz held the NWA World title six times during his fabulous 50-year career. Many consider him the greatest all-round wrestler in history.



PROF. TORU TANAKA

"Several years ago I face Gilbert when he very young. He was too young to know what wrestling game was all about. Needless to say, I pound him into mat. A lesser man would have gone and quit wrestling after such a beating, but Gilbert prove his worth by continuing to hone his mat skills. He also acquire necessary meanness he needed to be big star in mat game. Now he is famous worldwide. He has proven his worth. He is a true champion."

Prof. Tanaka, a three-time co-holder of the WWF World tag team title with Mr. Fuji, is currently a successful actor.



JACK BRISCO

"What a disappointment. I was a big fan of Gilbert when he started out in the Mid-Southern area years ago. Suddenly, he moved to Memphis and aligned himself with Jimmy Hart, and he's never been the same since. Sure, he's won his share of championships, but titles mean nothing if they aren't won with honor. Gilbert will stoop to any low to win his matches, and now he's even worse since taking on Paul E. Dangerously as his manager. Such a shame."

Jack Brisco is a two-time former NWA World champion, and a three-time former NWA World tag team champion with brother Jerry.



Stan Lane and Bobby Eaton (left) won the U.S. belts from The Fantastics while Jim Cornette was suspended above the ring in a cage (right). Tommy Rogers led the attack on Cornette after the match (far right).

THE MIDNIGHT EXPRESS:

“WE PROVED WE DON'T NEED JIM CORNETTE TO WIN!”

Stan Lane and Bobby Eaton, The Midnight Express, are thrilled they were able to win the U.S. tag team title from The Fantastics without the outside help of wily manager Jim Cornette. But even without Cornette, Lane and Eaton's actions show that they have little to be proud of

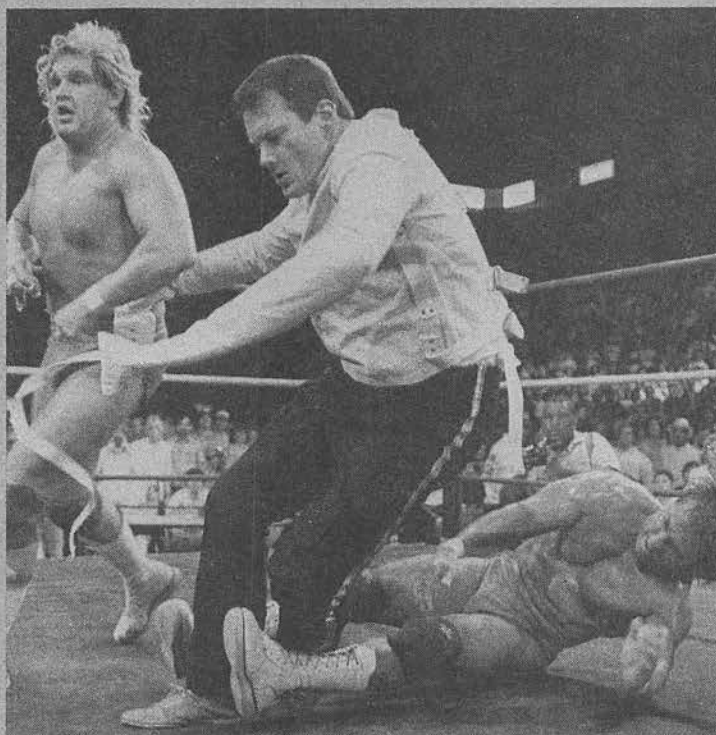


You are hereby invited to a gala outdoor celebration and press conference honoring the world's greatest tag team and new U.S. champions, The Midnight Express. Swimwear optional. Refreshments will be served.

WRESTLING REPORTERS across the country were stunned when they received printed invitations from Stan Lane and Bobby Eaton inviting them to a self-congratulatory victory party. The notices attracted a number of news-hungry scribes to Jim Cornette's mansion, located on sprawling country acreage near Louisville, Kentucky.

The assembled journalists found the sun-drenched Lane and Eaton lounging in Cornette's huge swimming pool on inflatable rafts, wearing only swim togs and their newly won U.S. tag team belts. A pair of curvaceous blondes in skimpy bikinis sunned themselves on a nearby wooden deck.

Photos by Roy London



"Media dudes and chicks, I'm glad you could make it," Lane announced in his deep radio-style voice as he peered over a pair of designer sunglasses. "There's some champagne and hors d'oeuvres on the bar over there. As you can see, we're quietly celebrating our victory over The Fantastics for our NWA U.S. tag team title. We thought we'd use this occasion to thank all of you who supported us in our quest to regain these belts."

While most of those present snickered at Lane's comments (eliciting an angry glare from Bobby Eaton), all were surprised to note that Cornette was not at poolside. "Where's Jimmy?" asked one reporter. "It's not like him to be absent for his own party."

"Wait a minute," said Eaton, toweling off before easing down on a lounge chair. "You'll notice that nowhere on your invitations

does it mention the name of Jim Cornette. This is *our* party. We sent Jimmy on an all-expenses-paid vacation to Club Med to show him our appreciation."

"That's right," said Lane. "As you all saw in Baltimore a few days ago, we destroyed Fulton and Rogers very easily. And, despite what many of you fools have written in the past, we did it *without* any outside involvement from Jimmy. We proved we don't need Jim Cornette to win a championship."

"Does this mean you've finally wised up enough to *dump* Cornette?" asked one young scribe.

"Not on your life, cubbie," retorted Lane. "Why would anyone want to get rid of the finest mind in the history of the sport? We just wanted to prove to you idiots what we knew all along anyway—that we can excel on our *own*."

Indeed, Lane and Eaton were
(Continued on page 50)

**Police
Brutality!**



BIG BOSSMAN INVADES THE WWF!

“I DON'T REALLY like to talk about those days,” said Eddie Chestwood, a former corrections officer, “but in your case I’ll make an exception.”

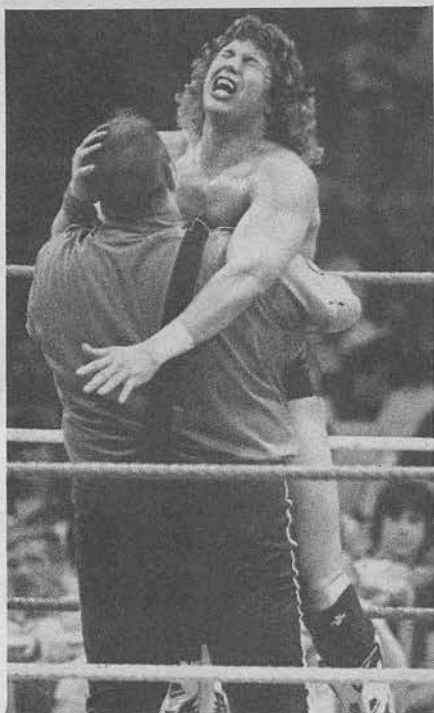
Chestwood, whose full head of gray hair makes him look much older than his 51 years, retired as

a Cobb County corrections officer in 1983 after 20 years in the department. Now a moderately successful hardware store manager, he agreed to speak to *The Wrestler* at his modest home near the prison where he once worked.

“As soon as I was eligible for

retirement, I got the hell out of there,” said Chestwood. “Basically, I was happy with my job. Now, nobody ever said being a prison guard was easy work, but at least the money was good. Then, a few years ago, there was a shortage of qualified guards, and they start-

Big Bossman has taken the WWF by storm. Not only has he defeated all opposition thrown his way, but he has sadistically abused wrestlers with postmatch billy club whippings. His actions have outraged fans and officials—but a man from his past isn't surprised at all!



ed advertising for new people. As a result of that campaign, one of the first new people I had to train was a huge man named Rogers."

Chestwood stared into his coffee. One could sense by looking at him that this was one man who was very glad to have changed careers.

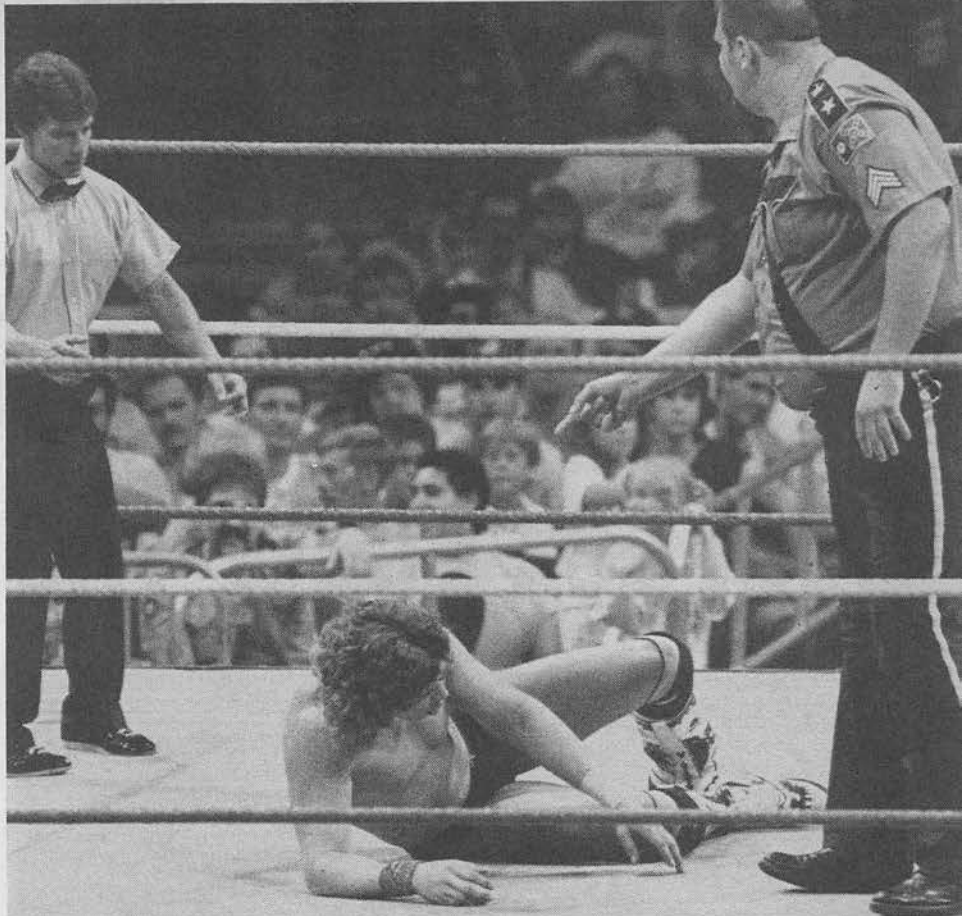
"That big slob drove me crazy," Chestwood said with a sarcastic laugh. "No one could deal with him. Prisoners, other guards, the warden, you name it. I got into an argument with him once, he broke my jaw and otherwise beat the stuffings out of me. He was as nasty as they come. He was always being called into the warden's office for disciplinary lectures."

The day he retired, Chestwood recalled, was the same day that Rogers took over as the officer on his cell block.

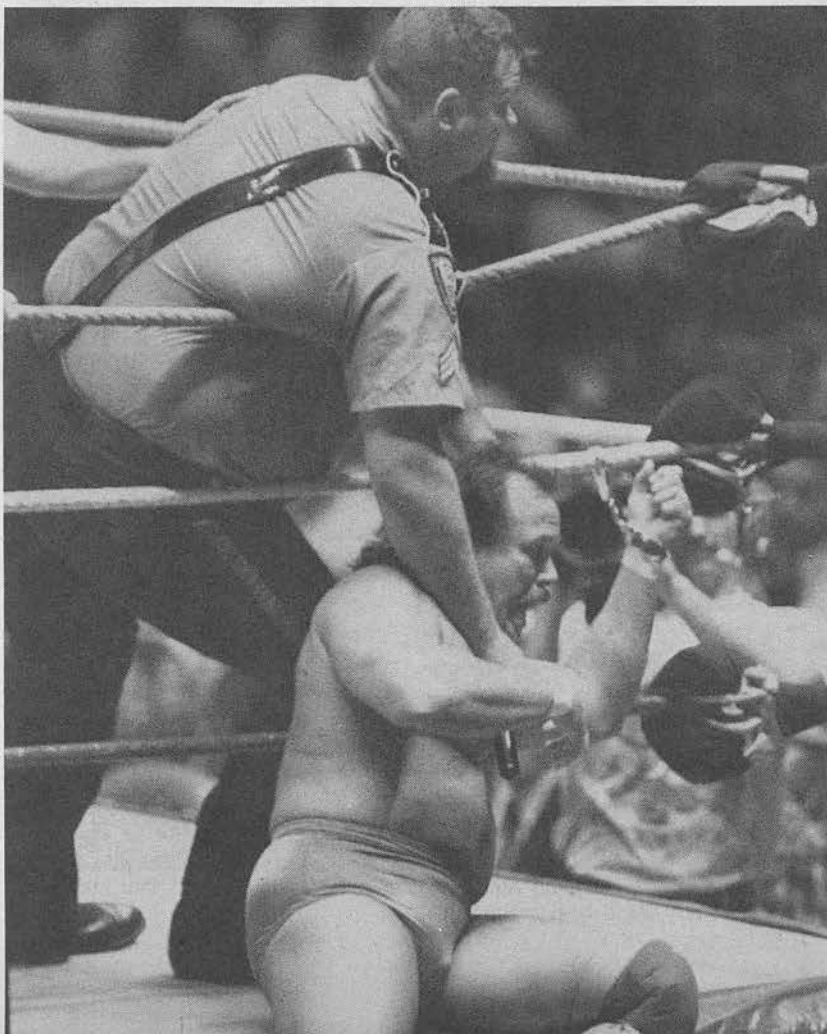
"For the first time," recalled Chestwood, "I felt sorry for the inmates. But as a 'C.O.,' Rogers didn't last long. A few months later, I heard he was suspended for abusing prisoners. But I wasn't surprised to see he became a wrestler. No, I wasn't surprised at all."

Chestwood recalled a recent televised match where Rogers,

(Continued on page 54)



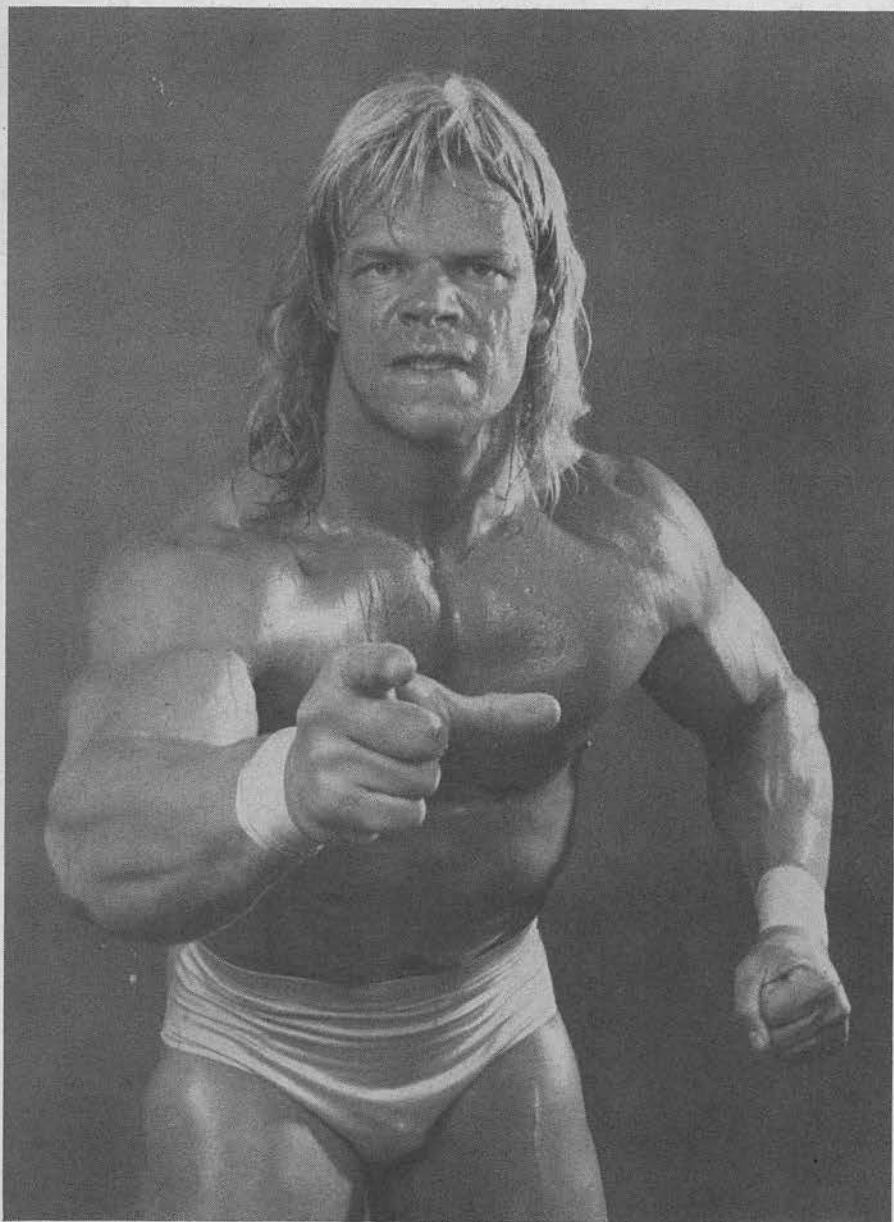
Big Bossman bearhugs Sam Houston (above left) and, after unceremoniously dumping him to the mat, assaults him with a flood of verbal abuse (above). Bossman's postmatch sadism (below, against Scott Casey) has shocked most WWF fans.



SCANDAL!

Photos by Roy London

The Conspiracy That Cost Lex Luger The NWA Belt



Lex Luger is outraged by a Maryland Athletic State Commission decision that may well have cost him the NWA World heavyweight title.

THE MARYLAND STATE rule that requires a match to be stopped at the first sight of blood—a rule cited as the reason for the abrupt halt to the NWA title match between Ric Flair and Lex Luger at the Baltimore Great American Bash in July—may not exist, *The Wrestler* has learned.

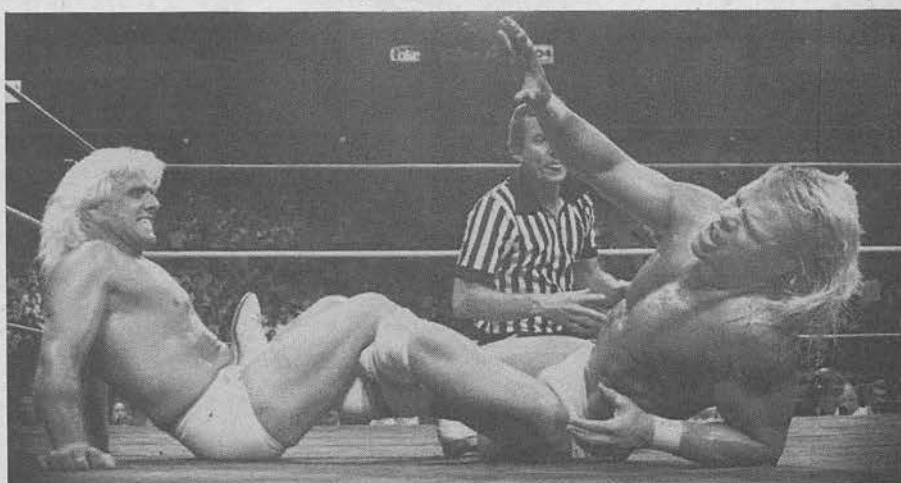
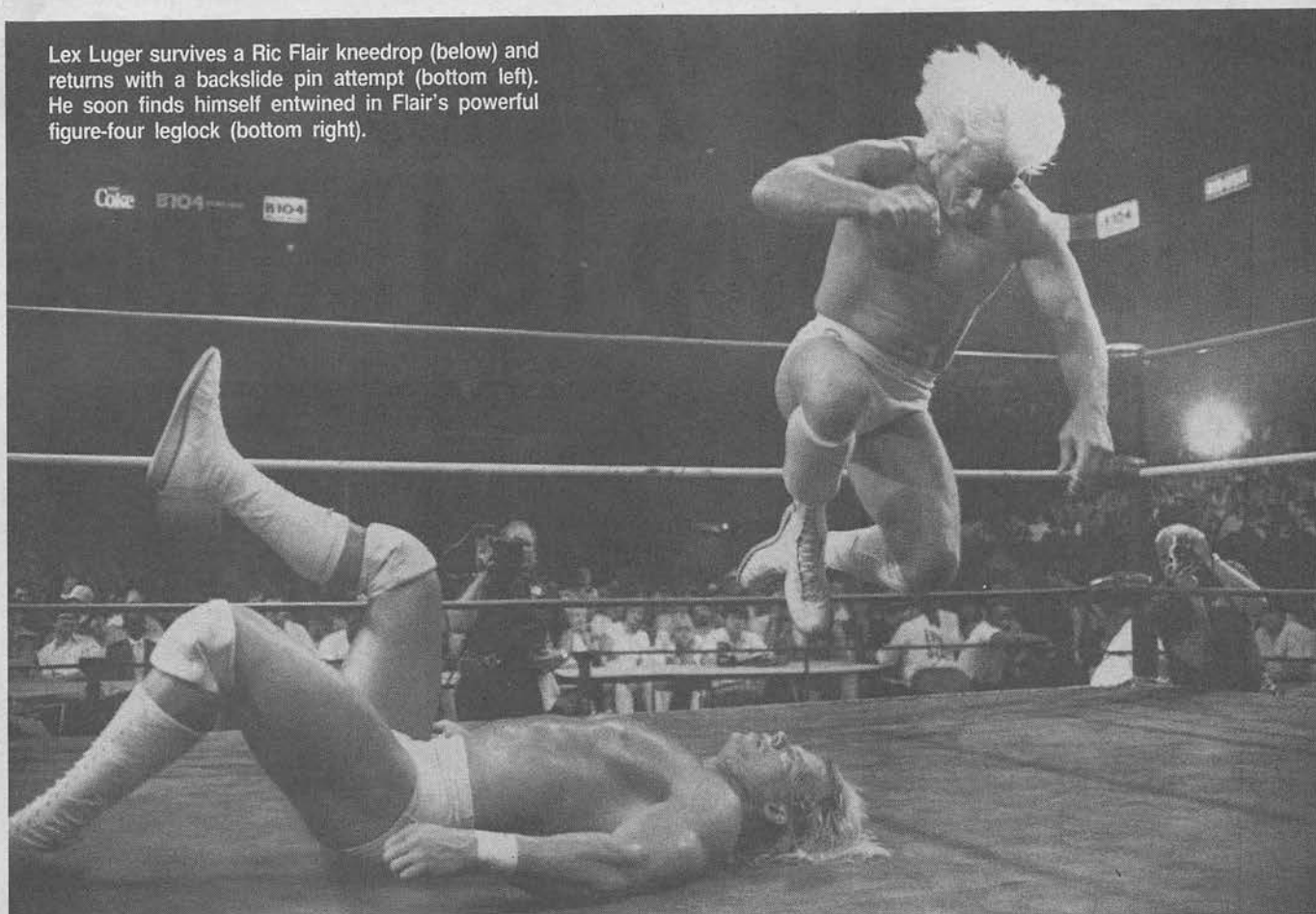
Luger had Flair in a backbreaker, and was possibly on the verge of winning the NWA World title, when Maryland State Athletic Commission official Ray Ianucci ordered referee Tommy Young to stop the match. Luger, along with 13,000 fans at the Baltimore Arena, began to celebrate, assuming that the champion had submitted. The official announcement brought the party to a sudden end.

"It was a good match, one of the best I've seen in years," Ianucci told *The Wrestler* in an exclusive interview. "I hated to stop it, but I had to. Maryland has a state athletic guideline that prohibits a match from continuing after blood has been sighted. This code is on the books because of the danger of blood-transmitted diseases. When I saw [Luger's] blood on Flair's shoulder, I had to stop it. There doesn't have to be a big pool or anything, just a little will do it."

In a sport where bloodshed is to be expected, though, why would

In a startling decision, a Maryland State Athletic Commission official stopped Lex Luger's NWA World title match with Ric Flair at the Baltimore Great American Bash. He was allegedly following the guidelines of a state code, but a *Wrestler* investigation revealed the very real possibility that no such code exists!

Lex Luger survives a Ric Flair kneedrop (below) and returns with a backslide pin attempt (bottom left). He soon finds himself entwined in Flair's powerful figure-four leglock (bottom right).



the NWA allow its matches to be sanctioned by a commission that will not tolerate even the smallest of cuts? According to Maryland attorney Mike Trainer, manager of boxing great Sugar Ray Leonard,

the answer is simple: Such a rule does not exist. Boxing, too, falls under the jurisdiction of the Maryland State Athletic Commission, and Trainer says he would know if

(Continued on page 56)

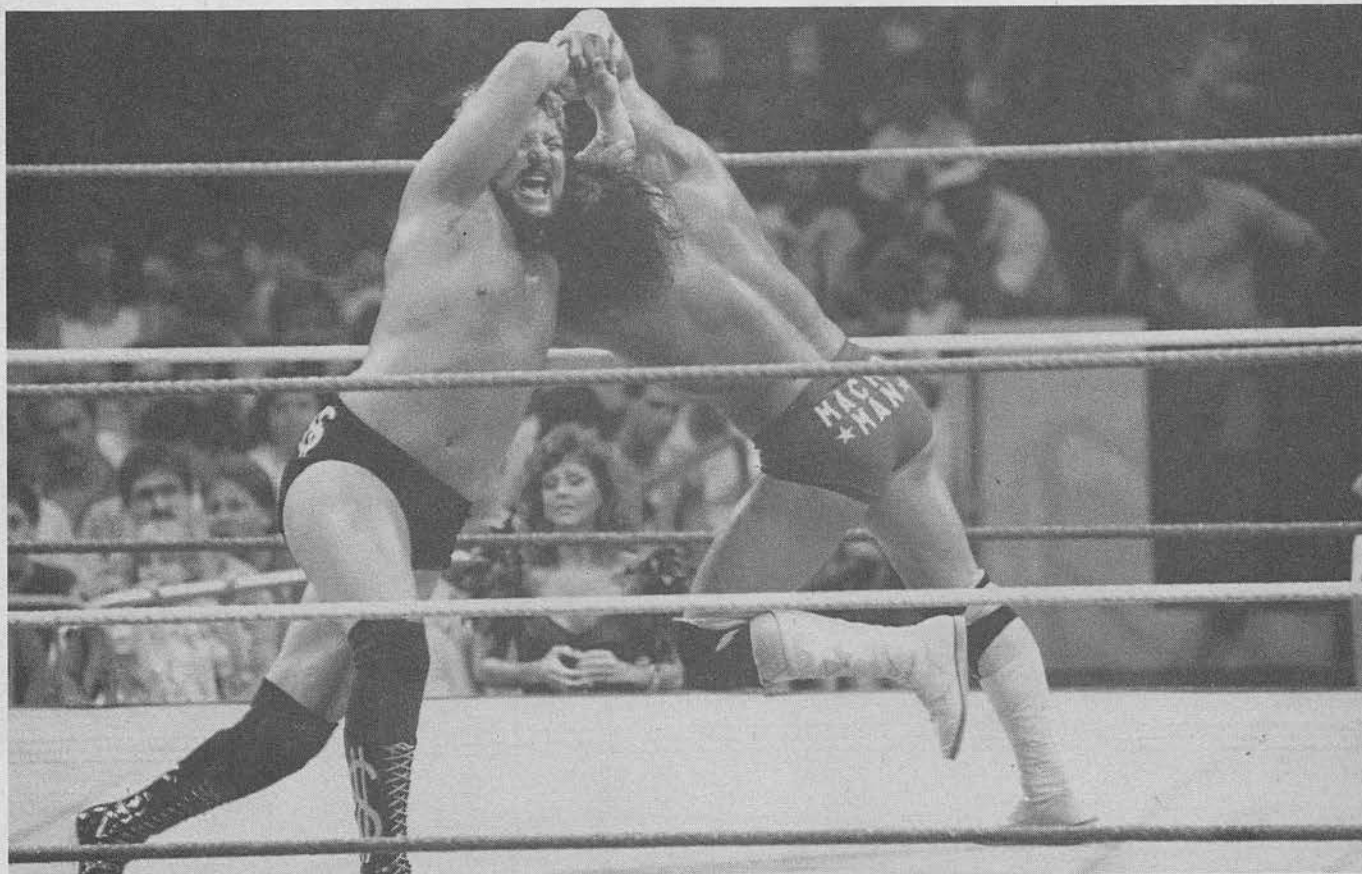
SCANDAL!

The “*Friends*” Who Plot To Stop Ted DiBiase

Bobby Heenan, Virgil, and Andre the Giant seem to be enjoying a laugh with Ted DiBiase, but the joke will be on “The Million-Dollar Man” if these so-called “friends” of his are indeed plotting against him!



Ever since WrestleMania IV, Ted DiBiase has been after Randy Savage's WWF World title. But *The Wrestler* has learned that a diabolical plot by "The Million-Dollar Man's" cohorts—Bobby Heenan, Andre the Giant, and Virgil—may be keeping him from his goal!



Elizabeth looks on in concern as DiBiase gains the advantage in a test of strength with Randy Savage. Ironically, three of the "Macho Man's" enemies—Heenan, Andre, and Virgil—may be helping him retain his WWF heavyweight title in his feud with DiBiase.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF Bobby Heenan's decision last January to sell Andre the Giant's contract to Ted DiBiase are still being felt in the WWF ... but not by Hulk Hogan, whose World title DiBiase hoped to buy. Indeed, the attempted sale of the World belt, which nearly destroyed the WWF, now threatens to bring down the very person that precipitated it: "The Million-Dollar Man" himself!

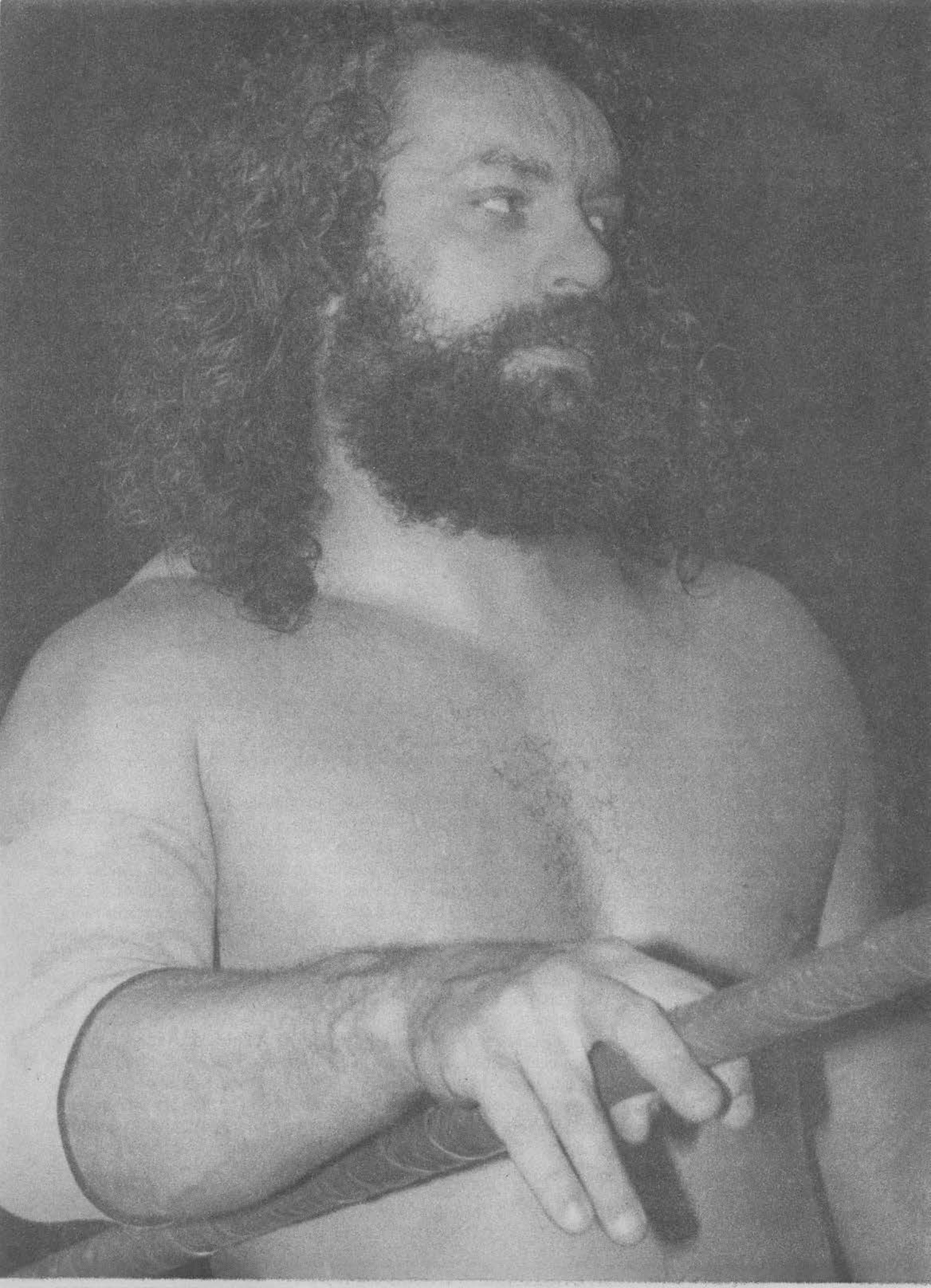
That's the finding of an investigation by *The Wrestler* initiated after an anonymous WWF wrestler called in a tip to our New York office. Although nothing can be 100 percent verified (Andre, Heenan, DiBiase, and Virgil refused to discuss the situation),

there is strong evidence to indicate that Heenan is paying Virgil—with money DiBiase paid him—to keep "The Million-Dollar Man" from ever winning the World title.

"That appears to be the case," said Assistant Editor Bob Smith, who led the investigation for *The Wrestler*. "DiBiase is a rich man, but some of the ways he handles his money leave a lot to be desired. Apparently, DiBiase paid a lot more for Andre's contract than he got when he sold it back to Heenan. The original sale of Andre's contract to DiBiase was a multimillion-dollar deal; Heenan reacquired Andre for a few hundred thousand dollars, and he's used the extra money well."

DiBiase, of course, realized that his money was poorly spent a few days after Andre's February 5 title match against Hogan. Andre won the title as the result of a bogus three-count by an imposter referee who was bought off by DiBiase. The Giant immediately handed the World title belt to DiBiase, but WWF President Jack Tunney later decided that it was against the rules to give the title to another wrestler. DiBiase was "stripped" of the title (technically, Andre was stripped, as DiBiase was never a recognized champion) and left with nothing.

Although DiBiase refused to publicly acknowledge his mistake
(Continued on page 60)



THE WILD LIFE AND TRAGIC DEATH OF BRUISER BRODY

By Dave Rosenbaum

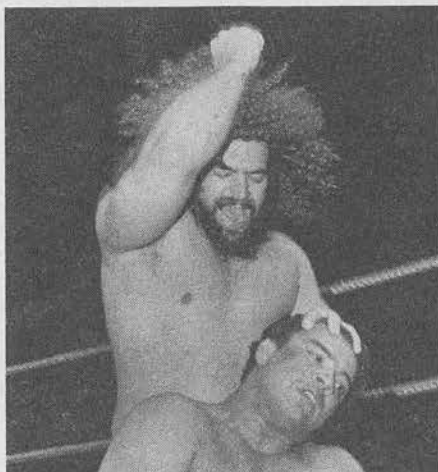
BRUISER BRODY LIVED two lives. In the wrestling ring, he was known as the "Mercenary of Mayhem," a brutal brawler who would tear apart his best friend for a buck. That was the Bruiser Brody fans, the media, and opponents knew. Outside the ring he was Frank Goodish, a family man who cared about his friends. "A stand-up type of guy," said Bruno Sammartino. "He was a man."

Sammartino, like so many others who knew Brody, is still asking questions about the circumstances surrounding his tragic and violent death. On Saturday, July 16, at approximately 7:30 p.m., Brody was stabbed twice in the abdomen shortly after entering the locker room at Juan Ramon Lobriel Stadium in Bayamon, Puerto Rico. He died the following morning in the operating room of the Rio Piedras Medical Center in San Juan. Brody, 42, is survived by his wife, Barbara, and son, Geoffrey.

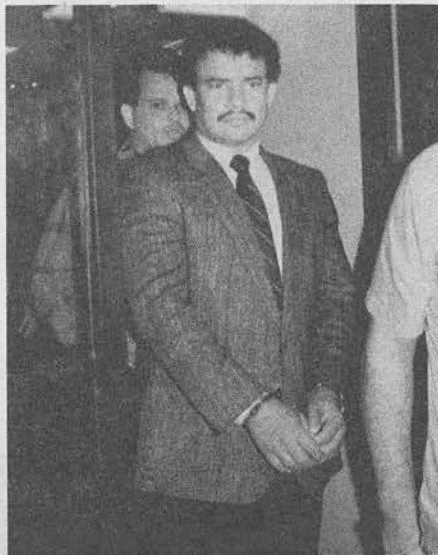
Jose Huertas Gonzalez, who wrestles under the name Invader I, was arrested two days after Brody's death and charged with first-degree murder and weapons violations. According to the *San Juan Star*, Gonzalez, 42, was taken to the Hato Rey Judicial Center and held in lieu of \$120,000 bail. After spending one day in jail, Gonzalez was released on bail the following day. A preliminary hearing was scheduled for August 8 at the Bayamon Judicial Center.

Although several wrestlers were in the locker room when the stabbing

***"The knife was a big sucker
and it was moving
the whole time.
It was cold-blooded murder.
[Brody] never suspected
a thing."
—Tony Atlas***



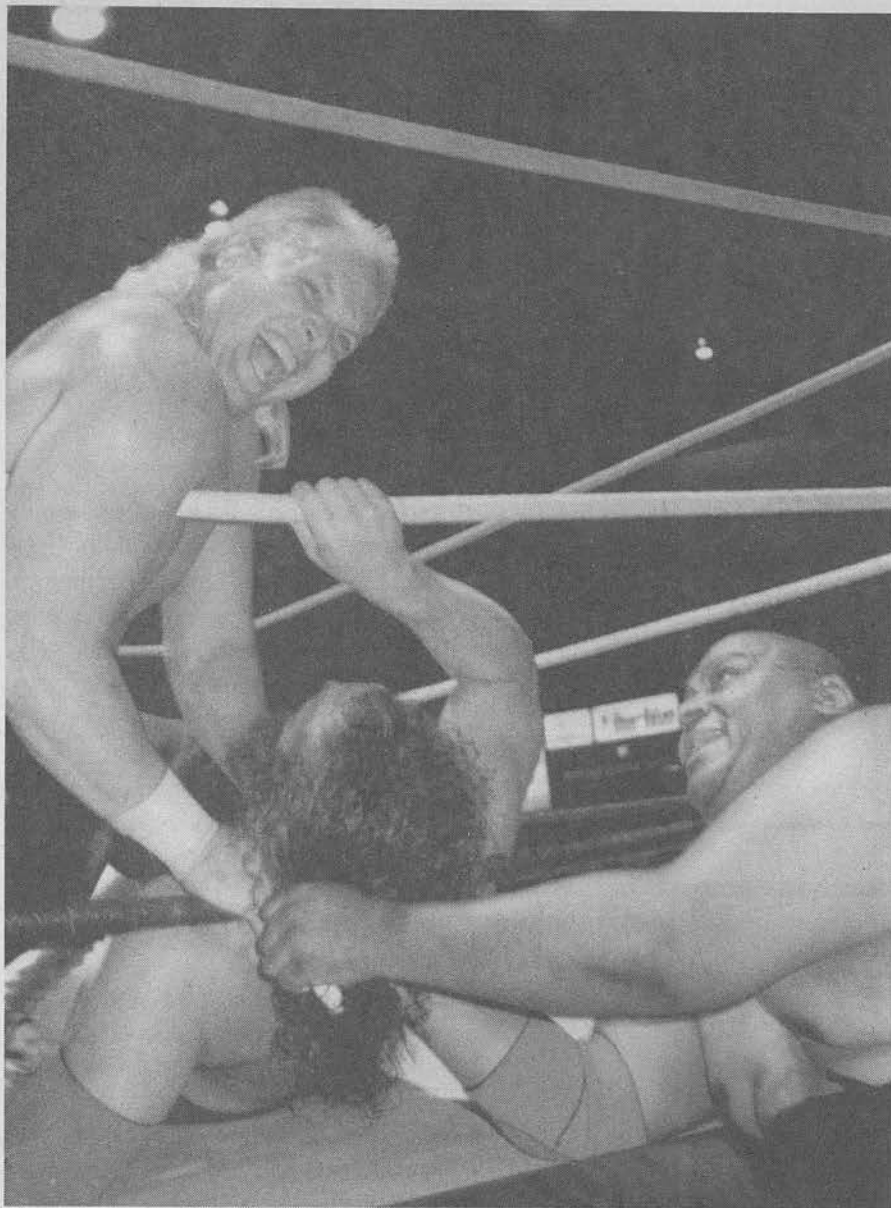
1976: Bruiser Brody elbowes Jose Gonzales (above). 1988: Gonzales is arrested for the stabbing murder of Brody (below).



took place, Tony Atlas was apparently the only one who witnessed the incident. "Me and Brody walked through the door with Dutch Mantel," Atlas told *The Wrestler* exclusively. "The Youngbloods were there and they came up to me and said, 'Tony, did you finish our picture?' because I do drawings. Then Brody came up to me and said, 'Tony, I had some stuff done of my boy, but it was all done like cartoons.' I said, 'Brody, you got a picture, I'd be more than glad to do it for you.'"

"Then Jose [Gonzalez] came by with a towel wrapped around his hand and said to Brody, 'Brody, *m'amigo*, come here for a minute, *por favor*.' Jose waited at the shower door for him, but nobody paid him no matter. Guys walk through the dressing room with towels a thousand times. Brody then walked through the door and I was just looking at him, because he was in the best shape he's been in for a long time. Then when they got into the shower, Jose just wheeled around and stuck him in the lower abdomen.

"Brody grabbed his belly. You know how when you give a guy an uppercut? That's how Jose hit him, between the [pectorals] and the stomach. Brody tried to back out the door, and all of us jumped up when he hollered. Then we saw Jose with the blade. I was sitting outside the shower, about eight feet away, and the shower door is glass. When I saw Jose's hand, I thought it was a punch at first, but by the time we got right at the door, that's when we saw the second stab. They didn't even talk [when Brody and



Brody's last match found him double-teamed in Ponce, Puerto Rico, by Dan Spivey and Abdullah the Butcher.

Gonzalez went into the shower].

"Then one of the Youngbloods said, 'Watch out, he's got a knife. Carlos Colon yelled out, 'No, Jose, no!' and he grabbed him. The knife was a big sucker and it was moving the whole time. It was cold-blooded murder. [Brody] never suspected a thing. He was in a good mood the whole day."

"I was in the dressing room, but not when it happened," said Dutch Mantel. "I walked in, then [Brody] put his bag down and sat down. I walked out to the dugout to check out the crowd and came back. It couldn't have been more than five or six minutes later. He was lying on the floor, holding his hands to his stomach.

"Carlos was with him, and Frank was saying, 'I need help, I need help. Please tell my wife I love her and tell my little son I love him.' He knew he was dying. I just went over into the corner and said a prayer for him. There was a doctor in the dressing room, but it was like hell. He needed more than a doctor. I looked into the shower room and there was Victor Jovica pushing back Invader, screaming and hollering in Spanish. Invader wanted to get back at [Brody]. The bizarre thing is that Invader then walked in around his body, took his keys, and left."

Gonzalez wrestled later that evening. He could not be reached for comment.

At press time, the weapon used in the stabbing had not been recovered. According to Atlas, "there were three

people left in the shower [after the stabbing]: Jose was going crazy with the knife, Jovica, and Colon. I saw Jose walk out the door empty-handed. Carlos came over and told Brody to lay down on the floor. He was with him the whole time."

"I saw Jovica in the shower room with Jose," said Mantel. "[The police] searched the dressing room and couldn't find the murder weapon."

Jovica, Colon, Gonzalez, and Victor Quinones are part owners of Capitol Sports Promotions, which operates the World Wrestling Council.

Bayamon Criminal Intelligence Commission agent Orlando Figueroa told the *San Juan Star* that Gonzalez and Brody were having an argument when the stabbing occurred. But according to witnesses, no words were exchanged between Gonzalez and Brody prior to the stabbing. At press time, a motive for the stabbing had not been established.

Although Brody never held a world championship, he was long considered one of the world's finest wrestlers. An analysis in the Fall 1986 issue of *Wrestling Superstars* rated him as the best all-around wrestler in the sport, although by that time his popularity in the United States had waned. Brody, however, was a legend in Japan, where he wrestled frequently and held several major singles titles. Brody was a three-time All-Japan International champ and lost the belt for the last time on April 14, 1988, to Jumbo Tsuruta.

Brody first entered the spotlight in 1976 when he came to the WWF and engaged in several matches against then-champion Bruno Sammartino. After leaving the WWF, Brody did battle with Fritz Von Erich, The Bruiser, and also feuded with Andre the Giant in St. Louis.

In the early 1980s, he and teammate Stan Hansen were considered the finest tag team in Japan and won several titles. In recent years, Brody's most famous feud in this country was against Abdullah the Butcher. Brody and Abdullah were known to battle throughout arenas in no-holds barred matches. □

★ **COMING OCTOBER 11** ★
A REMARKABLE SPECIAL ISSUE OF

Wrestler

★ **Featuring** ★

THE SUPERSTARS OF A SUPER SUMMER!

A spectacular eight-page full-color bonus section highlighting the top stars and peak action that made the summer of 1988 one of the most memorable seasons ever in wrestling!

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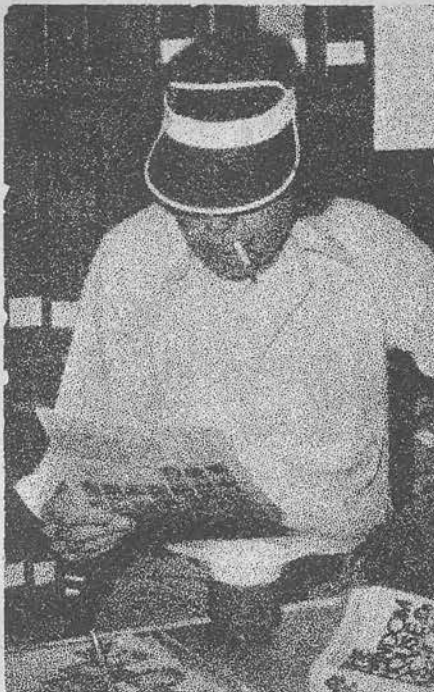
★ **Hulk Hogan** ★ **Ric Flair** ★
★ **Randy Savage** ★ **Lex Luger** ★
★ **Hacksaw Duggan** ★
★ **Sting** ★ **Jake Roberts** ★
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AND MANY, MANY MORE!

This special feature will include extensive full-color action coverage of the WWF's Milwaukee WrestleFest and the NWA's Great American Bash series, plus top summer '88 action from across the country

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

**The "Superstars Of A Super Summer" special issue of
The Wrestler is cover-dated December 1988 and goes on sale October 11.
This one is sure to be a sellout, so get to your newsstand early!**

MATT BROCK'S



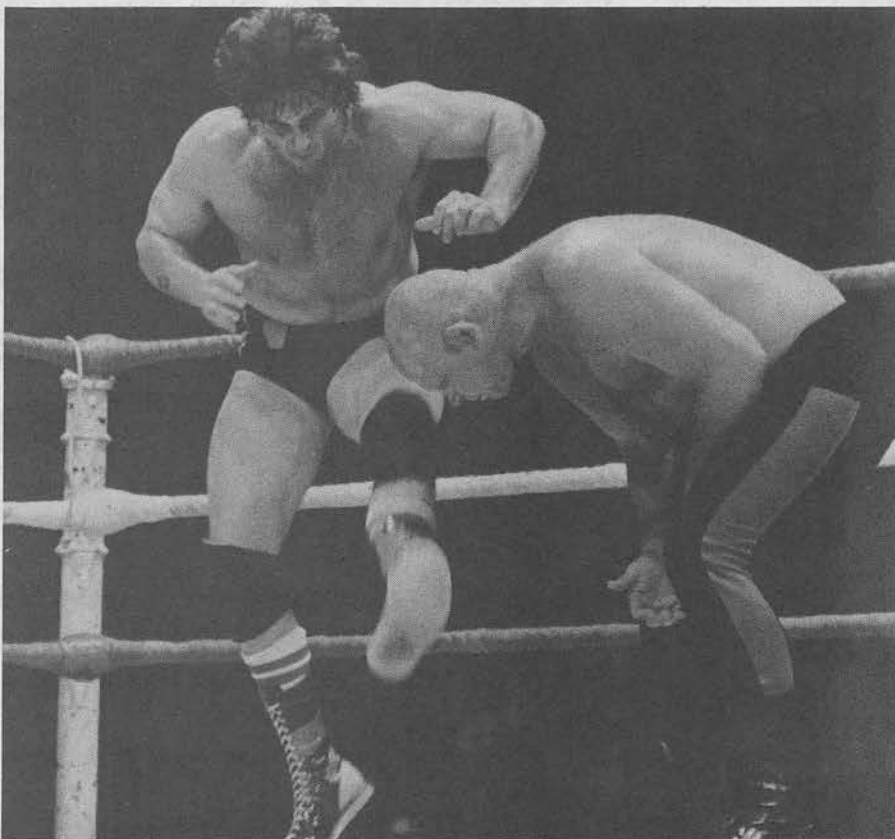
LOOKING BACK

October 1981 Adrian Adonis & Jesse Ventura vs. Baron Von Raschke & Crusher

IF YOU WANT to remember Adrian Adonis—I mean, *really* remember him—remember him as he truly was. His most recent tenure in the WWF, when the weight problems and homosexual charade dominated, did not do justice to the talented and courageous wrestler who had overcome a myriad of life's obstacles.

That's how I'll remember Adonis. I've already purged myself of the image of the bloated, gay sideshow in McMahon's pathetic circus. In keeping with his sorry tradition, McMahon stripped Adonis of his noble past, a past that included the WWF and AWA World tag team belts.

That's the wrestler I remembered when I leafed through my scrapbook before preparing this article. When I came across these photos of Adonis and Jesse Ventura's match against Baron Von Raschke and Crusher, I remembered the *real* Adrian Adonis, the juggernaut from the slums of Manhattan whose nine years in the mat sport



Adrian Adonis, arguably the best pure athlete among wrestlers in the past 10 years, leaves his feet to knee Baron Von Raschke in the head.

will be remembered far longer than the 34 years it took him to live out his life.

Omaha, Nebraska, never really changes. It's about the same today as it was in 1981—or in 1963, when I covered Fritz Von Erich's title victory over then-AWA World champion Verne Gagne.

I remember Adonis and Ventura well on that night in October '81. Nebraska workers are hard workers, and a hard day's work left these fans ready for a hot night's action.

Although they were hated rulebreakers, Adonis and Ventura could excite a crowd like no other team of that era. On this night, having just lost their AWA World tag team belts only four months earlier, Adonis and Ventura battled as if their careers depended on it.

They just might have.

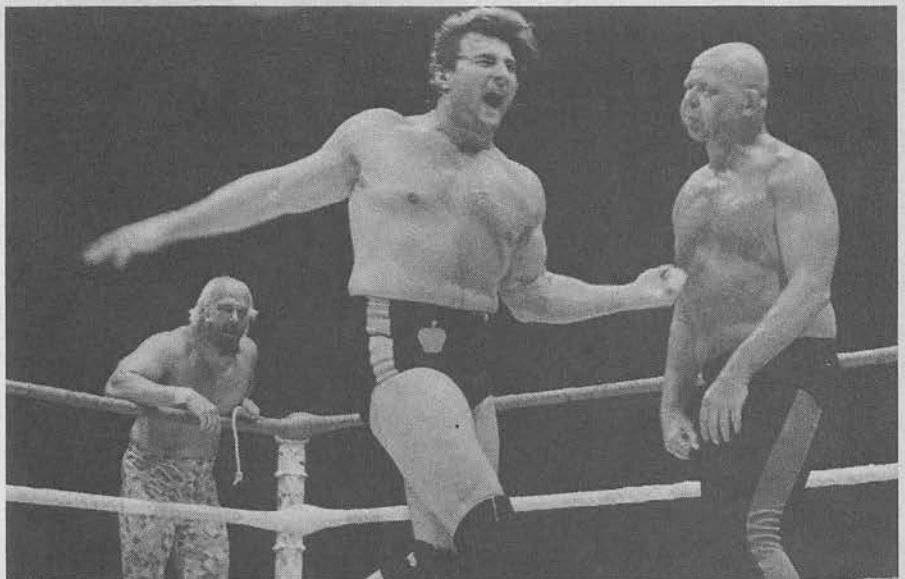
All too often, tag teams quickly fade away and are forgotten after they lose a major title. But not Adonis and Ventura. And especially not that October night in Omaha.

Even though the fans were clearly on the side of Von Raschke and Crusher, every time Adonis tagged in the crowd would go silent, anticipating a veritable explosion of action.

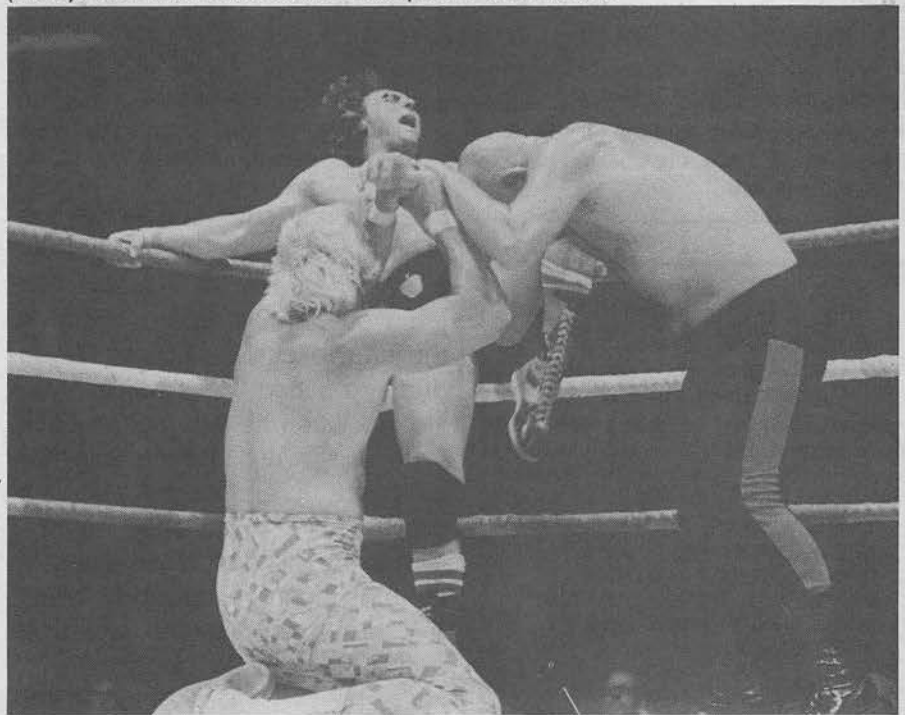
This is not to say that Adonis didn't give his all every night. It just seemed that on *this* night he was at his energetic and powerful best, dishing out more punishment to the Von Raschke-Crusher team than they could face in months of competition against lesser opponents.

Years after that memorable match, I ran into Adonis at a bar just a couple of blocks from Madison Square Garden in New York City. Even though we hadn't seen each other very much since that night in Nebraska, Adrian remembered me and bought the first round. He had just joined the WWF for the second time. Although cordial to the smallest detail, this was not the Adonis I'll remember.

This Adonis was bloated and subdued. As he took a swig from his beer, his speech betrayed his sensitivity.



Adonis hammers the Baron's midsection while Jesse Ventura looks on gleefully (above). As Ventura fights off a Von Raschke clawhold, Adonis lifts his knee into the Baron's chest (below). This is the Adonis Matt Brock prefers to remember.



"Remember Omaha, Matt?" he said quietly. "Jeez, that feels like it was 100 years ago, don't it?"

I hated to hear that, because I wanted to believe that Omaha was only yesterday, that this legend of the mat world still had Omaha in him. The more Adonis spoke that night, the more I knew the Omaha inside Adonis was gone.

I looked closely at Adonis. To him, Omaha might have been 100 years ago, but to me, it seemed closer to 100 pounds ago. This was not the body that carried Adonis to his two World championships. Although he still wres-

tled with his former passion, his weight had ballooned. He'd lost control over it. It seemed to me that Adonis used his weight problem to justify the grotesque character he was playing. The gay persona was just another element of the pathos.

That's when my memories of Adrian Adonis, the championship wrestler, end.

And now Adrian is gone. It's a shame. Not so much for what could have been, but for that fact that most won't remember him for what he once was.

I, for one, will.

□

YOUR LETTERS

(Continued from page 7)



Kamala backs Andre the Giant into the corner with a powerful left hand during a September 1983 match in Texas. Chris Salinas recalls Andre being slammed by Kamala in World Class several years ago.

If someone jumps up on the ring apron during a match, you must turn your back on the match to persuade him to leave. In the meantime, the match will surely get out of hand. Follow a similar rule in tag team cases. If there are ever four men in a ring, you must forcibly remove one of them. Again, you can turn your back on the double-teaming action.

If you get knocked out, upon waking you must give the three-count to whomever is being pinned regardless of the circumstances.

Referees say they don't have eyes in the back of their head. That's true. But can't they look over their shoulders? I guess if they had *this* ability, they would be *disqualified* as referees!

ART BACKSTROM
Chicago

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Everybody says that Andre the Giant has only lost one battle royal in his career. Well, I saw him jump off the top rope and out of the ring to chase Michael Hayes during a World Class battle royal. He lost when he was not let back in the ring. Also, I once saw Kamala pick up and slam Andre with ease.

Yes, I think that World Class is the most boring wrestling show on TV, but many historic wrestling events have taken place there.

CHRIS SALINAS
Milwaukee

REJECTING REFS

I have been watching wrestling live and on TV since Lou Thesz was NWA World champion, and I truly believe that no matter how stupid a person is, that person is *still* qualified to be a wrestling referee.

To be a referee, all you have to do is follow a few simple rules: You can allow a person to drop-kick, elbow, or piledrive his opponent, but you can't ever let someone make a fist.

ABSENCE OF CHARACTER

While wrestlers everywhere are clamoring to get in the WWF, I have compiled a list of several whom I think would be wise to get out.

● Virgil: Ted DiBiase's bodyguard should start wrestling again. Formerly known as Soul Train Jones, he was exciting and popular. Now he's just a bodyguard for one of the most hated men in wrestling.

● Ron Bass and Junkyard Dog: Ron Bass' feud with Blackjack Mulligan was one of the best ever in the Florida area. He is now feuding with JYD, who was fantastic before entering the WWF. He and Bass are both washed up in the WWF.

● Bam Bam Bigelow: He was feared in every wrestling federation to which he traveled, but in the WWF he is no threat. Everyone, including your magazine, predicted big things for the big man, but neither he nor his man-

(Continued on page 46)

THIS MONTH IN...

PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED



Who will be the next to leave
THE FOUR HORSEMEN?



Learn why **BAM BAM BIGELOW** is no longer wrestling in the WWF

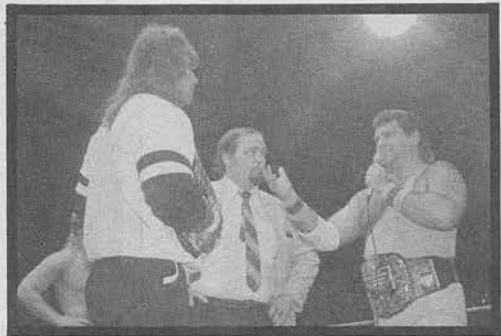
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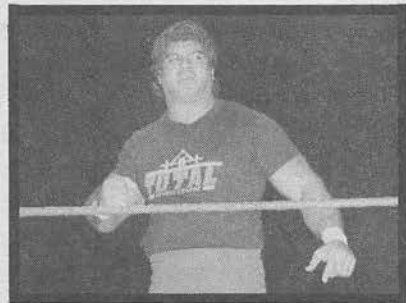
GEN. SKANDOR AKBAR'S startling confession: "**KAMALA** is deathly afraid of **KERRY VON ERICH**!" . . . A powerful "Press Conference" with **PRECIOUS** . . . "Media Review" and "The PWI Poll"

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Inside Wrestling



World Class champion **KERRY VON ERICH** takes on AWA World champion **JERRY LAWLER**—and when worlds collide, *nobody* wins!



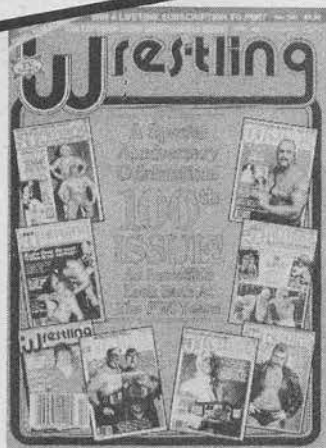
Find out why **DON MURACO** begged the WWF *not* to suspend **GREG VALENTINE**

PLUS . . .

TERRY GORDY, **MICHAEL HAYES**, and **BUDDY ROBERTS** explain why **THE FREEBIRD** feud must end! . . . "Hotseat" interview with **LEX LUGER**: "The world knows who the *real* champion is!" . . . **RONNIE** and **JIMMY GARVIN** face off "One on One" . . . **DUSTY RHODES** battles **BARRY WINDHAM**—and the teacher learns a lesson from the student!

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YOUR LETTERS

(Continued from page 44)



Bam Bam Bigelow delivers an atomic spinecrusher to Ted DiBiase. Bigelow's level of success in the WWF has been far below the expectations of reader Dave Parker.

ager, Oliver Humperdink, have been able to realize these dreams. Since he can't beat Randy Savage, or even get title shots, he should move on to the NWA where he would certainly emerge as a major force.

● Rick Steamboat: After losing the Intercontinental title to The Honky Tonk Man, Steamboat had become wrestling's forgotten superstar. Since then, he has quietly retired. I think he should move on to the NWA where he almost defeated Ric Flair on more than one occasion.

All of the above are great wrestlers whose talents, I believe, are wasted in the WWF.

DAVE PARKER
New York

BRAIN-LESS

What in the world is wrong with you guys? I can't believe you would give Bobby Heenan a "Thumbs Up" in your September 1988 issue. Perhaps he *did* pull Rick Rude away from Jake Roberts' wife, but the only reason he did this was to hasten Rude's departure from the scene; Jake Roberts was on the way! Heenan certainly didn't care about Jake's wife, *that's* for sure!

I should think by now that you

people would know that "The Weasel" has only the interests of his wrestlers at heart. I wish you would take this into consideration before you start praising or condemning an action.

DARRELL STEWART
Telford, Nova Scotia

UNDERRATED TAG TEAM

I wish your magazine would print some stories about one of the greatest tag teams I have ever seen, John Tatum and Jack Victory.

For your information, Tatum and Victory hold not one, but *two* titles here in Texas. They captured the World Class Texas tag team title from Steve and Shaun Simpson on April 8, 1988, in Ft. Worth; they also captured the Wild West tag team title from Steve Simpson and Terry Gordy on May 8, 1988, in Irving, Texas. As I write this letter, they continue to hold both titles and are defending them on a regular basis. Yet I have hardly seen a word of praise for these magnificent champions anywhere in *any* magazine.

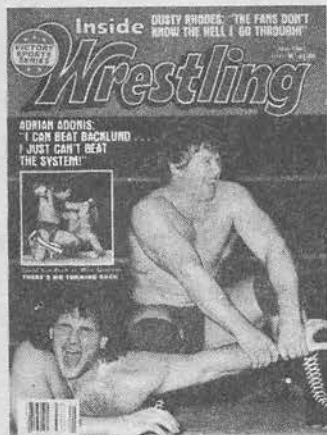
So please, let's have some stories on Tatum and Victory. They're great, and they deserve it.

GARY KUMAN
Dallas ☐

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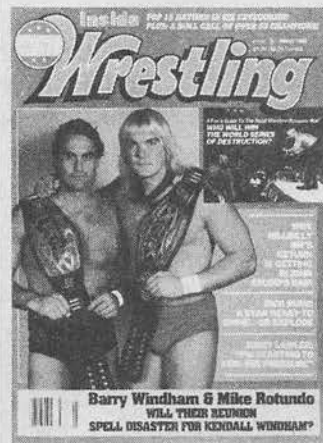


MAY 1982

May 1982/Stories include: Backlund, Rhodes, Hogan, Von Erich.
June 1982/Stories include: Valentine, Von Erich, Slaughter, Morales.
July 1982/Stories include: Hogan, Rhodes, Steamboat, Adonis.
August 1982/Stories include: Andre, Backlund, Steamboat, Backlund.
September 1982/Stories include: Atlas, Piper, Lawler, Brody.
October 1982/Stories include: Rich, Andre, Piper, Dillon.
November 1982/Stories include: Flair, Snuka, Von Erich, Slaughter.
December 1982/Stories include: Mulligan, Rich, Lawler, Grand Wizard.
February 1983/Stories include: Rhodes, Hogan, DiBiase, Hake.
March 1983/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Graham, Johnson, Funk.
April 1983/Stories include: Snuka, Patera, Kabuki, Rich.
May 1983/Stories include: Rich, Snuka, Sullivan, Steamboat.
June 1983/Stories include: Studd, Garvin, Rogers, Orton.

July 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Freebirds, Rhodes, Youngblood.
August 1983/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Garvin, Sullivan, Lawler.
September 1983/Stories include: Zbyszko, Piper, Andre, Hayes.
October 1983/Stories include: Wrestling II, Backlund, Junkyard Dog, Rhodes.
November 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Reed, Von Erich, Dillon.
December 1983/Stories include: Von Erich, Samoans, Valiant, Road Warriors.
March 1984/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Rich, Rhodes, Garvin.
April 1984/Stories include: Flair, Steamboat, Superstar, Windham.
May 1984/Stories include: Iron Sheik, Steamboat, Rotundo, Von Erich.
June 1984/Stories include: Flair, Slaughter, Cornette, DiBiase.
July 1984/Stories include: Valiant, Flair, Martel, Wrestling II.
August 1984/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Magnum T.A., Idol, Spoiler.
September 1984/Stories include: Martel, Brody, Von Erich, Iron Sheik.
October 1984/Stories include: Billy Jack, Road Warriors, Steamboat, Piper.
November 1984/Stories include: Rhodes, Rich, Hernandez, Warriors.
December 1984/Stories include: Hogan, Warriors, Sullivan, Magnum T.A.
January 1985/Stories include: Magnum T.A., Rhodes, Atlas, Von Erich.
February 1985/Stories include: Rich, Adams, Valiant, Flair.
March 1985/Stories include: Backlund, Billy Jack, Koloffs, Von Erichs.
April 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Albano & Hogan, Steamboat, Gordy.
May 1985/Stories include: Slaughter, Garvin, Albano, Koloffs.
June 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Slaughter, Von Erichs, Studd & Patera.
July 1985/Stories include: Hogan, Von Erich, Nikita, Warriors.
August 1985/Stories include: Wrestlemania, Zbyszko vs. The Tonga Kid.
September 1985/Stories include: Piper, Flair, Fantastics, Magnum T.A.

October 1985/Stories include: Russian menace, Von Erichs, Rude & Barr.
November 1985/Stories include: Steamboat, Adams, Freebirds, Cornette.
December 1985/Stories include: Santana, Brody, Andersons, Murdoch.
January 1986/Stories include: Steamboat, Mike Von Erich, Warriors.
February 1986/Stories include: R'n'R Express, Warriors, Mulligan & Windham.



MARCH 1986

March 1986/Stories include: Windham & Rotundo, Warriors-Russians, Rude.
April 1986/Stories include: Scott Hall, Rhodes, Flair, Andre, Bill Watts.
May 1986/Stories include: Randy Savage, Stan Hansen, Rock 'n' Roll.
June 1986/Stories include: Bulldogs, Windham-Flair, Lance Von, Blanchard.
July 1986/All-American Special Issue. Stories include: Hogan, Slaughter, T.A.
August 1986/Stories include: Wrestlemania 2, Garvins, Martel, Fab Ones.
September 1986/Stories include: Andre, Rhodes-T.A., Adams, Windham.

October 1986/Stories include: Flair-Lugar, Savage, Fantastics, Warriors.
November 1986/Stories include: Warriors-Flair, Bulldogs, Watts, Adams.
December 1986/Stories include: Hogan-Adonis, R&R Express, Baby Doll.
January 1987/Stories include: Rude-Flair, Piper, T.A., Taylor.
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June 1987/Stories include: Piper-Adonis, Horsemen, Adams, Hall, Brody.
July 1987/Stories include: Danny Davis, DiBiase, Rockers, Rotundo, Andersons.
August 1987/Stories include: Dusty & Nikita, Hogan, Mike Von, Cornette.
September 1987/Stories include: Hogan-Race, R&R Exp., Rich, Honky Tonk.
October 1987/Stories include: R&R Express, Hogan, Taylor-Adams, Lawler.
November 1987/Stories include: War Games, Mr. T, Bulldogs, Rhodes.
December 1987/Stories include: Freebirds, Rhodes, Magnum, Savage, Perez.
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February 1988/Stories include: Savage, Kevin Von, Sting, Tully & Arn.
March 1988/Stories include: Bigelow, Adams, Koloff, Honky Tonk, Freebirds.
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June 1988/Stories include: Warriors, Savage, R&R Express, Baby Doll.
July 1988/Stories include: Hogan-Savage-DiBiase, Kerry & Hayes, Sting.
August 1988/Stories include: Savage, Missy Hyatt, Sting, Hayes, Honky Tonk.
September 1988/SPECIAL ISSUE: Color coverage of WMIV, Parade of Champs, Crockett Cup. Plus: Lawler, Von Erich, Hart, Cornette.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING

(Continued from page 8)

administrators, but Dillon was ignoring their requests.

In other developments, former NWA World champion **Ronnie Garvin** has joined the stable of manager **Gary Hart**, which also includes **Larry Zbyszko** and **Al Perez**. This shocking development was preceded by Garvin's interference in a July 10 bout pitting U.S. champion **Barry Windham** against **Dusty Rhodes** in Baltimore. The reason for Garvin's change of heart?

"Money!" laughed Garvin, the recipient of a huge cash payoff from Dillon and Hart following his ruthless—and unexpected—one-punch knockout of Rhodes. "From now on, I'm going where the bucks are, and I don't care who I have to hurt along the way. Dusty

was the first to find out, and now the rest of NWA has a big lesson to learn. People around here will never overlook me again."

Hercules Ayala regained the World Wrestling Council Universal title from **Carlos Colon** in a wild match on July 23 in Arecibo, Puerto Rico. Colon had control of this heated battle from the opening bell, but the match was marred several times by the interference of Ayala's manager, **Chicky Starr**.

After several meddlings by Starr, **The Justice Army**—consisting of **TNT**, **Miguel Perez Jr.**, **Hurricane Castillo Jr.**, and **Mark** and **Chris Youngblood**—came to ringside to even the score. As the referee attempted to remove Colon's friends from the area, Starr hit Colon with

a foreign object, allowing Ayala to catch Colon with a figure-four leg-lock and a small package for the disputed victory.

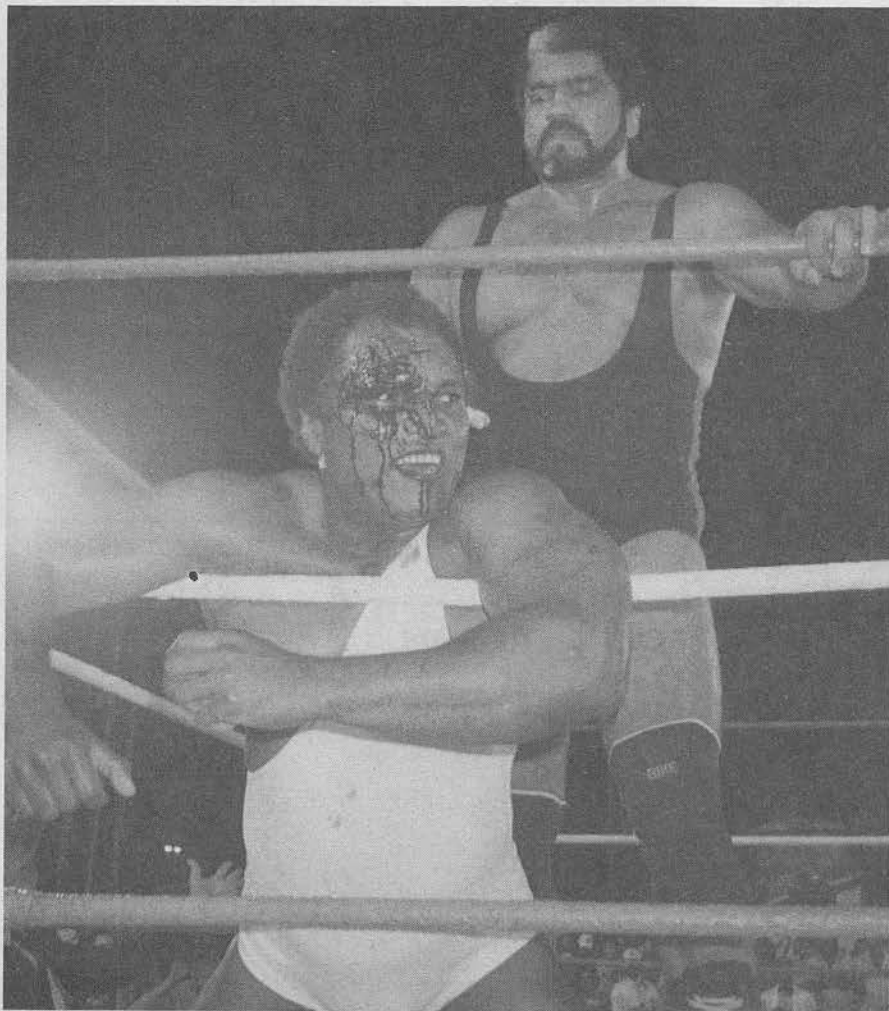
"This is typical of the kind of men Ayala and Starr really are," Colon said after the match. "I don't care what kind of match I have to sign for, be it a cage match, chain match, whatever. I must regain the Universal title at any cost, and in doing so I will drive Ayala from the sport forever."

Three titles changed hands in the USA area within the space of two days. **Nelson Royal** lost the USA junior heavyweight championship to **Scott Armstrong** July 22 in Knoxville, Tennessee. On the same card, **Wendell Cooley** regained the Tennessee title from **Buddy Landell**. The previous night, veteran **Mongolian Stomper** regained the USA heavyweight title from **Doug Furnas** in Johnson City ... **Jimmy Valiant**, currently in the CWA, is negotiating to appear in AWA rings ... Former AWA World champion **Curt Hennig** is headed to the WWF.

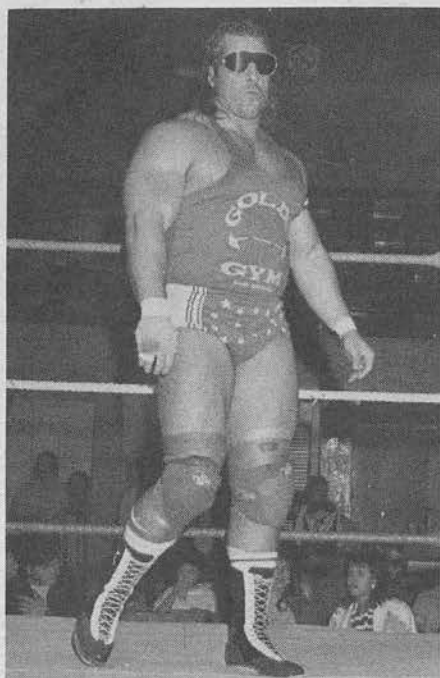
Stampede television announcer **Ed Whalen** has been drumming up support for a match between North American champion **Makhan Singh** and "Strangler" **Steve DiSalvo**. Matches between rule-breakers are rare in Calgary, but Whalen sees this confrontation as a natural.

"This is a match the fans are demanding," said Whalen. "These are the two biggest men in Stampede; and this match would be tremendously exciting for everyone involved. I can't see any reason why this match can't be sanctioned."

Neither does DiSalvo. "Singh is plenty tough, but I don't fear anyone," said the 6'2", 290-pound rulebender. "As far as I'm concerned, I'm ready to go anytime,



Hercules Ayala advances on a bloodied Carlos Colon. Ayala regained Colon's WWC Universal heavyweight title in Arecibo, Puerto Rico.



Stampede area superstar "Strangler" Steve DiSalvo is seeking a match against fellow rulebreaker Makhhan Singh, the North American heavyweight champion.

anyplace, and I'll grab that title as a bonus!"

On a sad note, veteran manager and wrestler **J.R. Foley** died July 24 as the result of lung cancer. Foley was one of the most infamous managers in Canadian wrestling history, managing such stars as **The Dynamite Kid**, **Junkyard Dog**, and **Giant Haystacks** in the Stampede area. He was 50 years old.

Finally, the entire wrestling world is mourning the death of **Bruiser Brody**, who was murdered July 16 in Bayamon, Puerto Rico (see story on page 38). His last bout was in Ponce, Puerto Rico, on July 15 when he teamed with **Carlos Colon** to battle **Abdullah the Butcher** and **Dan Spivey**. Despite keeping a low profile in the U.S. for the past few years, Brody was one of the most respected wrestlers in the world, and there were few active competitors who merged strength, speed, and style like the 284-pound Albuquerque native. Despite his tough ring demeanor, he was one of the greatest gentlemen ever to set foot in the ring. He will be sorely missed.

And that's what's happening. See you at the matches! ☐

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MIDNIGHT EXPRESS

(Continued from page 31)

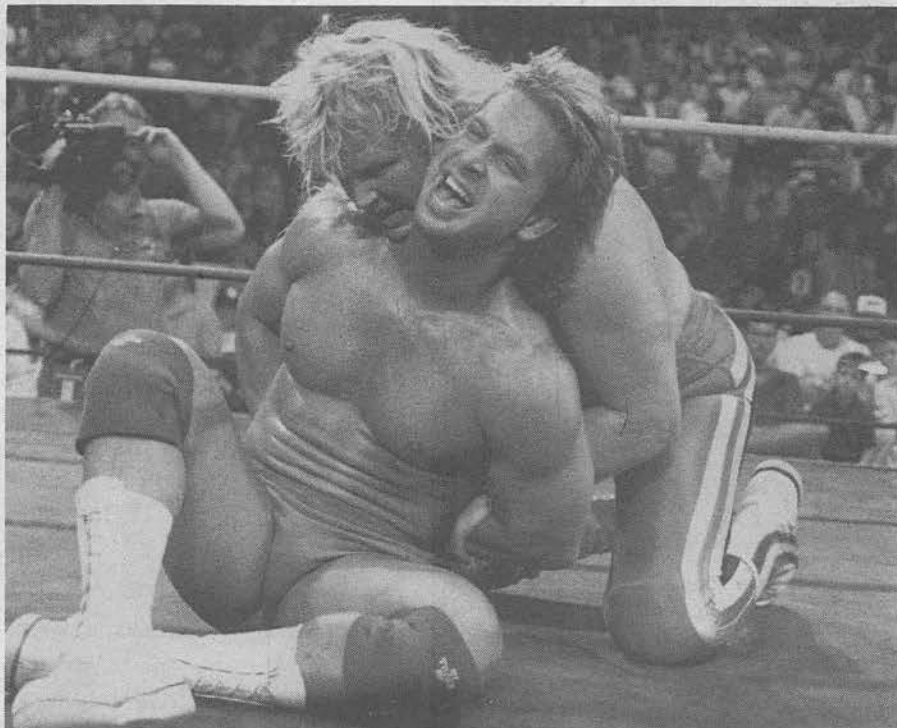
totally on their own when they faced The Fantastics during the July 10 Great American Bash in Baltimore, and they succeeded in gaining a pinfall to win the title. The way they won the match, however, was nothing to take pride in.

At the outset, it looked like it would be a night to remember for The Fantastics. A frantic, screaming Cornette was strapped into a straitjacket and suspended high above the ring in a small steel cage. If The Fantastics won, they would have the opportunity to remove the harness and whip Cornette 10 times with a leather belt.

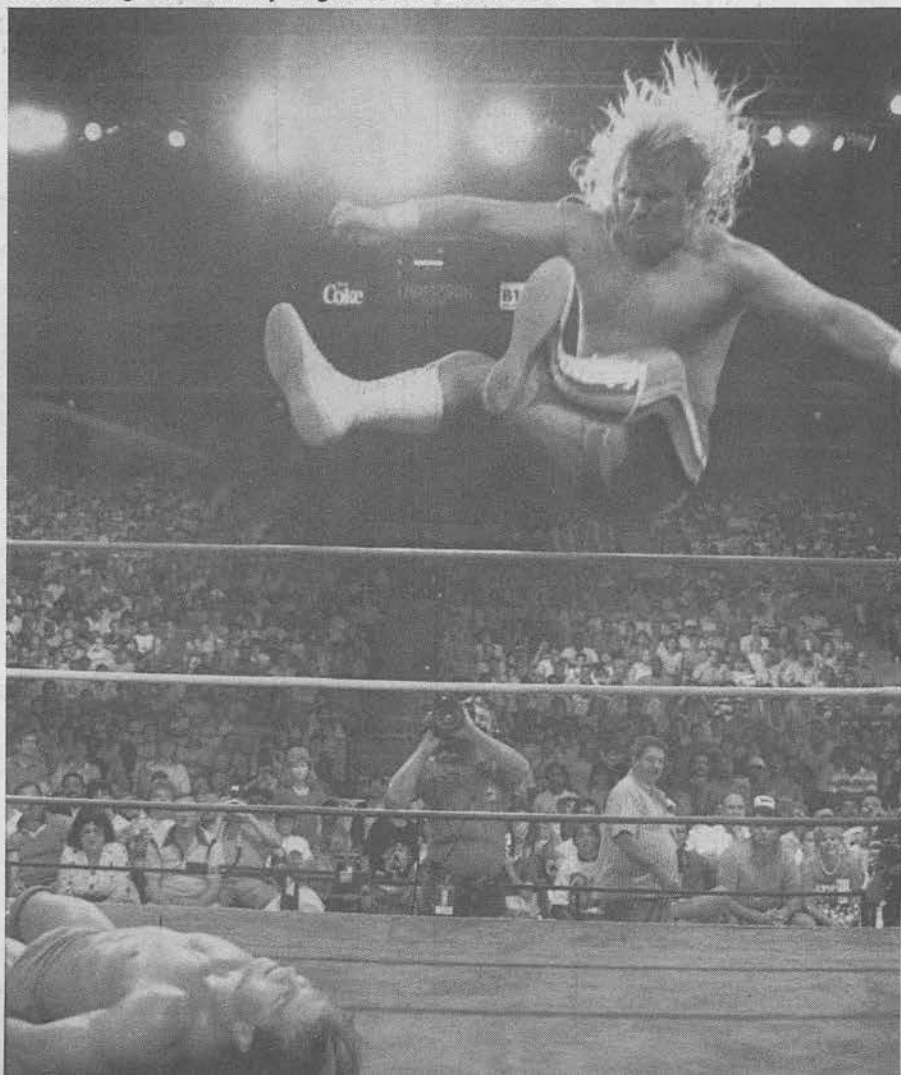
Unfortunately for Rogers and Fulton, locking up Cornette only succeeded in bringing out the worst in Lane and Eaton. The Fantastics dominated their rule-breaking opponents through the early part of the match as Fulton executed a pair of superb headscissors, and both Fantastics shook off a quartet of Lane's superkicks. But it wasn't long before the Midnights began to rally back, double-teaming Rogers with unrestrained savagery that included neckbreakers, backbreakers, and more superkicks.

Smelling victory, Eaton climbed to the top turnbuckle to deliver a "rocket launcher" against Rogers, but Rogers lifted his knees to Eaton's midsection. Rogers tagged Fulton, who attempted to deliver a bodyblock to Eaton, but instead slammed into referee Tommy Young.

While Young staggered in the corner trying to regain his bearings, Fulton ran Eaton's head into the steel ringpost. Eaton looked like he was finished, but Lane threw a chain into the ring, which



Eaton controls Rogers on the mat with a rear armlock (above). Though the Express wrestled a far more scientific match than usual against The Fantastics, their "victory" came about through the blatantly illegal use of a steel chain.



This legdrop from the top turnbuckle by Eaton (right) led to a near-pin on Rogers, who kicked out at the two-count.

Eaton wrapped around his fist. With Young still groggy, Eaton clocked Fulton with the chain, then stuffed the chain into *Fulton's* tights! Young returned to the action just in time to count the pinfall on Fulton. The Midnight Express' shameful actions were rewarded with the U.S. tag team title.

"We made a big mistake coming into this match," said Fulton. "We thought that the Midnights might actually wrestle like *men*. Instead, I get hit with a chain. Even without Cornette these guys are slime. But we've learned our lesson. We'll never underestimate the level they'll stoop to, and we won't rest until we make them pay for what they've done."

They may not get the chance. During their poolside press conference, Lane and Eaton claimed they were through with The Fantastics.

"We won't give them a rematch," said Lane, who joined the women on the deck. "We've had so many matches with those bums already. It's time for new challenges and new thrills for the new champions."

"Was it your decision not to face Rogers and Fulton again?" asked one reporter. "I can't believe you two are being so bold."

"Er, no," responded Eaton. "That was ... actually, it was Jimmy's *mother's* idea, but it's none of *your* business anyway. Your snide comments have ended this press conference, pal. The butlers will show you the way back to your cars. Now get out!"

Instead of admiring the new titleholders, reporters only felt sorry for Stan Lane and Bobby Eaton. They may be the U.S. tag team champions, but as long as they have Jim Cornette for their manager they'll never call their own career shots.

Considering their conduct inside the ring, that's the least of the punishments they deserve. ☐

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WIN, LOSE, OR DRAW

(Continued from page 10)

relationship. He holds back information from me that he freely dispenses to other reporters.

In his mind, he has good reason.

Several days before Starrcade last November, we had Cornette and the Express up to our offices for a photo shoot. After Bill Apter and Assistant Photo Editor Roy London finished taking pictures, I interviewed Cornette, Eaton, and Lane for 45 minutes. They answered all my questions with no problem.

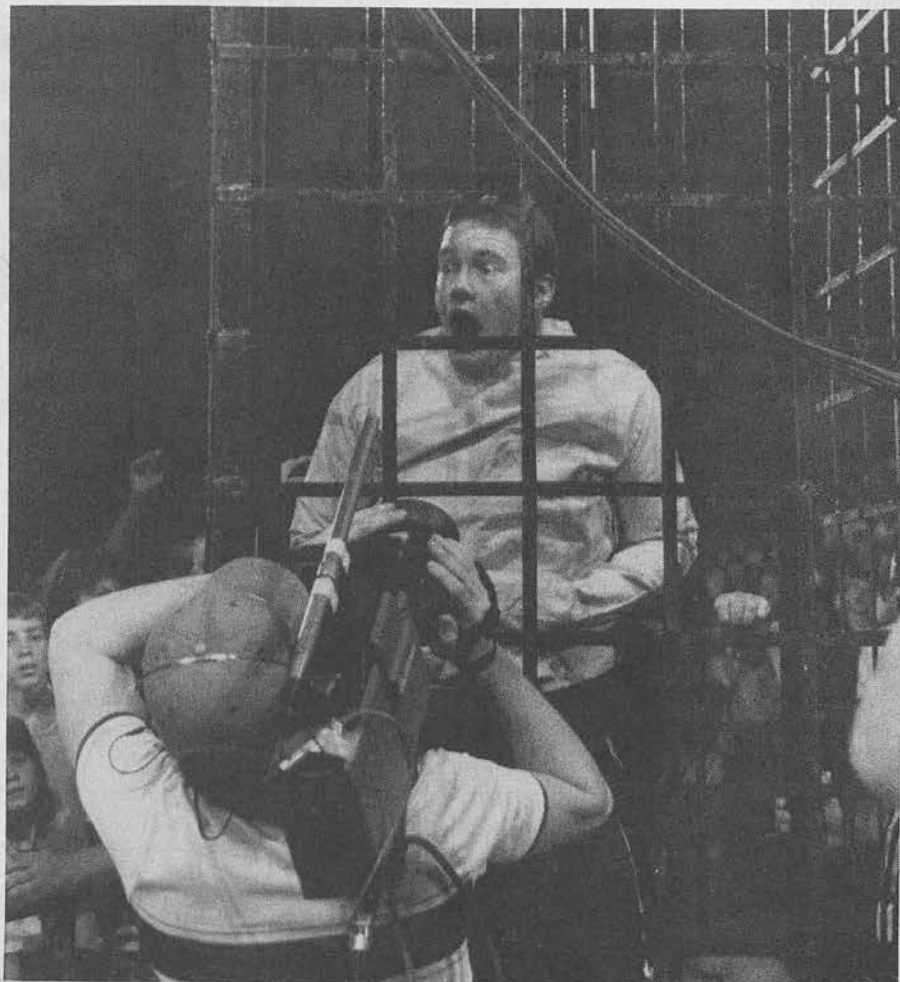
Afterward, the six of us had dinner at a local Italian restaurant. It was a time to unwind; we talked about everything *but* wrestling. One thing about Cornette and his men: If you talk with them away from the ring, they can actually be

nice guys.

Or so it seemed.

When it was time for us to take them back to the hotel, Cornette drove with Bill, and I agreed to take Eaton and Lane. It was about 10 p.m., and there was no traffic. We figured to get them back in a half an hour. Since I didn't know the way to the hotel, I followed Bill.

About halfway there, we turned onto a road I wasn't familiar with. Bill suddenly switched lanes. Before I could wonder why, my car practically fell into one of those giant potholes the county ignores for about 10 years. As we recovered from the shock of what seemed like an earthquake, I turned to Eaton and Lane and apologized. They told me not to



Cornette howls in frustration as he's locked inside the cage and hoisted above the ring at the Baltimore Great American Bash.



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worry about it.

Then I noticed that Bill had pulled over; I pulled up in back of him. He told me later that Cornette had seen what happened to my car and he'd nearly thrown a fit.

He was crazed. He got out of the car, slammed the door, and charged toward me. I was still sitting in my car with the seat belt on, and I didn't know what the problem was.

"You idiot! You lamebrain! What's wrong with you? You nearly got Bobby and Stan killed! I'll kill you *myself*, you jerk!" Cornette grabbed me by the lapels and was shaking me violently.

Before I could react, Bobby and Stan came to my rescue. "Calm down, Jimmy," Eaton said. "It was only a pothole, that's all. He didn't see it coming."

"Yeah, didn't see it coming, my foot!" Cornette spit out. He let go of me, but he was still shouting. "That's the *last* time I let you boys ride in a car. From now on we'll take a limousine. There's a phone over there. Bill, what's the number of the nearest limo company?"

"That's silly, Jim," Apter said. "It's getting late. Let Andy take Bobby and Stan back to the hotel and we'll talk about this later."

"No!" Cornette shouted. "I'm not letting *him* drive!" He was pointing at me. "We can take your car, Bill."

"C'mon, Jimmy," Lane said. "Bill's car is too small. I need some room to stretch out. Andy's been driving just fine."

Cornette was willing to listen to his own man—very grudgingly, however—and we all drove on without further incident.

Every so often Cornette will remind me about that night. Sometimes I can't tell whether he's serious or not. But either way, it's indicative of his character.

Ah, what would life be without Jim Cornette? ☐

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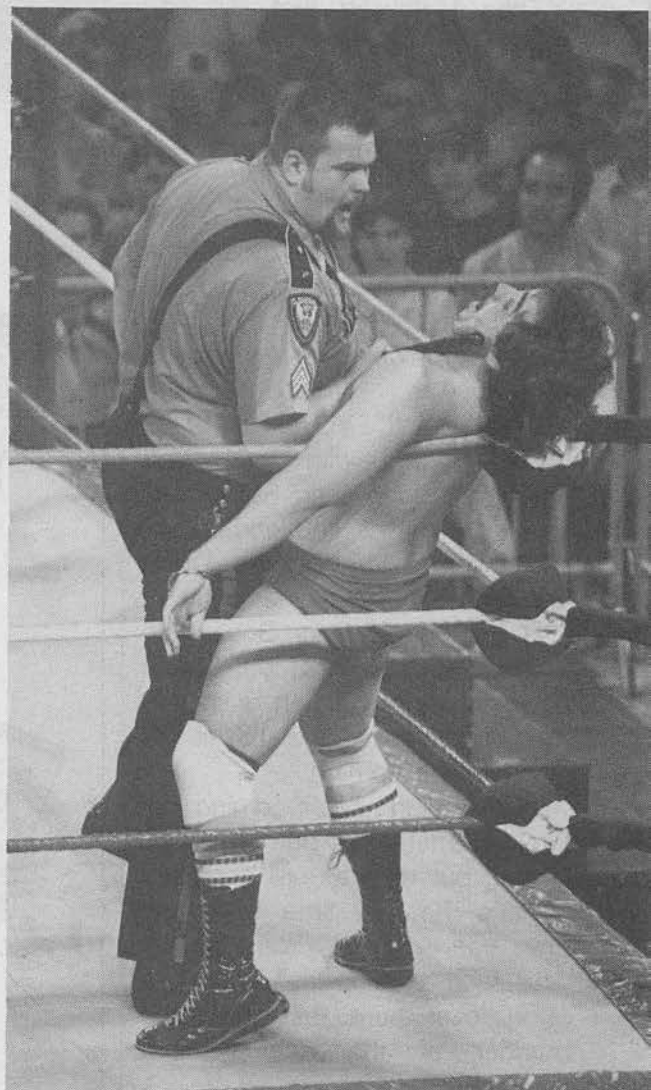
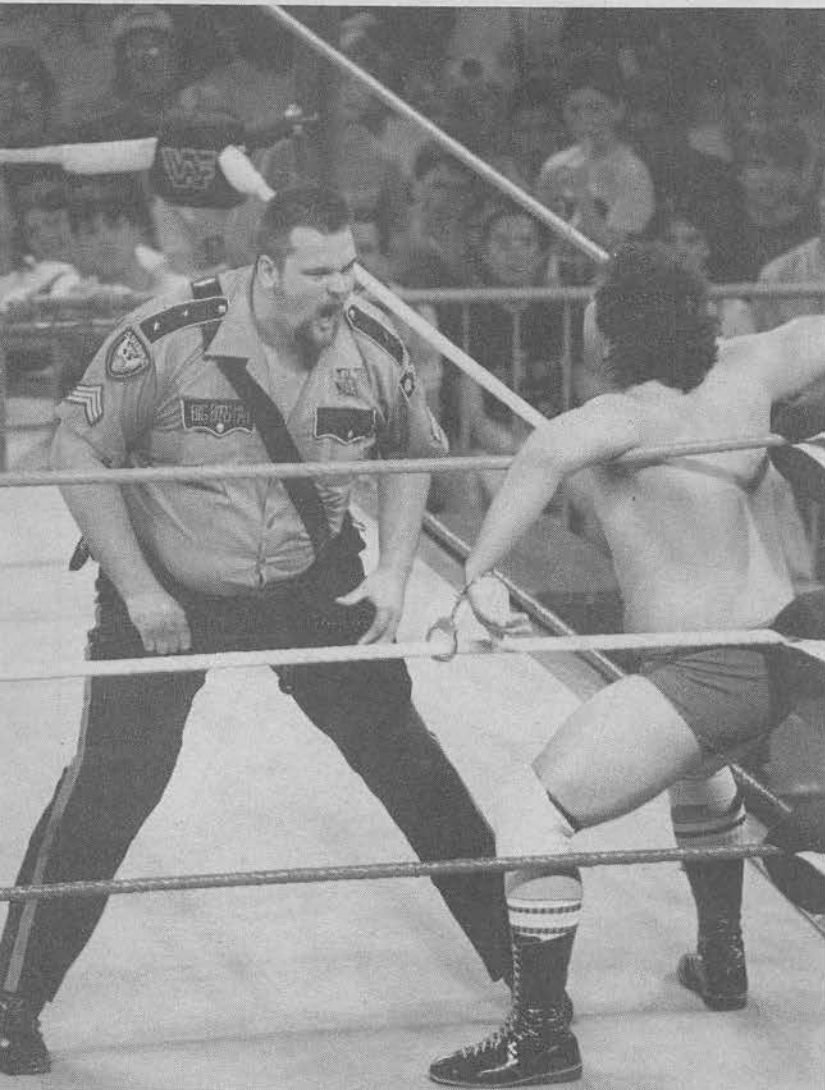
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BIG BOSSMAN

(Continued from page 33)



After handcuffing Mario Mancini to the rope, Bossman lets his opponent know that he's in for a lesson in discipline (above left), which includes being choked with Bossman's nightstick (above right).

now known as Big Bossman, handcuffed Sam Houston to the ring ropes and beat him with a nightstick after he had won the match.

"That's just like when he was in prison," laughed Chestwood. "He never knew when enough was enough."

Big Bossman *never* knows when enough is enough. Since his arrival in the WWF, Bossman has been busy destroying wrestler after wrestler, showing a degree of cruelty not seen in the federation in many years. Dressed from head to toe in the same corrections outfit he wore as a prison guard, Bossman acts like he's *still* in jail, choosing to *punish* his op-

ponents rather than simply defeat them.

Bossman is a changed man, both in attitude and appearance. For the past several years, he served as a bodyguard for Jim Cornette in the NWA. It was a different Bossman back then; at the time, he was known as Big Bubba Rogers. Cool and reserved, Rogers rarely said anything. He simply stood by, protecting his manager and The Midnight Express.

"Bubba did a great job," recalled Cornette recently. "He was as good a bodyguard as anyone could hope for. Around January of last year, though, he became moody and distant. I could tell that he wanted to become a great

wrestler in his *own* right, so I set him free. Naturally, I couldn't use my superior skills to manage him, because I'm always busy with my top priority, The Midnight Express."

It was early in 1987 that Rogers surprised the wrestling world by breaking loose from Cornette and venturing to the UWF, where the 6'2", 348-pound behemoth captured the UWF title from One Man Gang at a time when both men were managed by Gen. Skandor Akbar. After losing the belt to Steve Williams in July 1987, Rogers returned to Cornette. But soon thereafter, he disappeared completely.

Actually, Rogers is *still* gone. He's been replaced by the savage

Bossman, a competitor as capable and agile as Rogers, but with a markedly increased sadistic attitude. Ironically, Bossman is managed by Slick, who also manages One Man Gang—the man Bossman defeated for the UWF title. But Bossman doesn't seem to care. He's a wildman unleashed in the WWF, and it will take a very special competitor to defeat this mountain of a man. Bossman has already challenged Hulk Hogan and Randy Savage, and insiders claim he's anxious to tie them both to the ring ropes and pound them with his night stick.

Just like in prison.

"I don't care if it's here in Cobb County, or *where* the hell it is," claims Chestwood. "Sing Sing, Damamore, Alcatraz, *anywhere*. The idea of a prison is not to torture the inmates, but to try to keep them in line as best as we could. Rogers just couldn't get that concept through his thick head."

Chestwood invited the reporter to his living room where he displayed his mantle, on which were a host of photos and awards from his days as a corrections officer. He pointed at one photo depicting him giving someone who *looked* like Bossman—the hair was longer, the belly a bit flatter—a certificate of achievement proclaiming the giant an official Georgia prison guard.

"I added this photo when I found out he was a big star in wrestling," said Chestwood. "I'm probably gonna take it down, though. They shouldn't allow an animal like that in the arenas. Rogers is worse than the lowest criminals in stir. He's too tough for wrestling, just like he was too tough for prison."

He stared down at a scar on his right arm.

"Just like he was too tough for me," he muttered. ☐

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SCANDAL—LEX LUGER

(Continued from page 35)



J.J. Dillon slams Luger's head into the ringpost (above). This was the main cause of the head injury that resulted in a small trickle of blood—and an enormous controversy when the bout was halted while Luger had Flair in his backbreaker (opposite page).

there were any recent changes in the rules.

"Sure, wrestling has its share of bloodshed," Trainer said, "but a boxing match without even a bloody nose is unheard of. No, we don't have any regulation in Maryland that stops a bout at the first sight of blood."

When told of Trainer's comment, Ianucci maintained his position. It's impossible to reconcile Ianucci's position with Trainer's. The fact of the matter is that on July 10 in Baltimore, Lex Luger was

victimized. While one second the sculptured 6'5", 268-pounder was being congratulated by his peers and jumping for joy, the next moment he was hopping mad.

"Are they kidding?" Luger howled. "Three drops of blood? I've been cut until I could barely see, and they let Flair get by me because of three drops of blood? I had him in the backbreaker, a move that no one has ever survived. I had a submission in the palm of my hands! Sure, I was cut, but it was *nothing!* Leave it to J.J.

[Dillon], he knew all along about the Commission's rule. That's why he cut me outside the ring!"

When told about Trainer's view on the situation, however, Luger was livid.

"You mean there's no rule? This whole thing is insane! It's a load of crap, but I guess it's all Dillon's doing. It's his style, that scum. I wouldn't be surprised if this was another typical Dillon payoff. I saw it dozens of times while I was a Horseman, so I guess I shouldn't be surprised now."

Dillon, the manager of The Four Horsemen, denies any allegations of impropriety.

"Are you kidding? Bribery? The Horsemen don't need to stoop that low," Dillon said. "It's typical of Luger to make such a ridiculous assertion. The truth is that I have a complete knowledge of all state wrestling guidelines and codes. I knew the minute Luger was cut that the match would be over. In fact, if the state commissioners *didn't* do their job, I was prepared to protest the match."

At press time, Luger himself was unsure if he would protest the match. "I guess I'll wait and see what happens when the NWA finds out that there is no blood rule," Luger said. "Frankly, I can't see how, if the NWA knew of such a rule, they would have the match in Maryland in the first place. And if there was no rule, they had better have an investigation of their own to find out why the match was stopped."

Luger, observers agree, has seldom wrestled better than he did that night. Spurred on by the capacity crowd and the fact that the match was being seen by hundreds of thousands of people via pay-per-view TV, Luger controlled the action. He sustained the minor forehead cut when his head was rammed into a ringpost first by

Flair and then by Dillon outside the ring. Ignoring the cut, Luger made his way back into the ring and resumed his advantage. He had Flair on his shoulder for a seemingly inescapable backbreaker when referee Young signaled for the bell.



The timing of the stoppage could not have been worse for Luger—or Ianucci.

"The fans were really angry," Ianucci said. "I needed a police escort to get out of the building. The fans just don't understand the danger of blood-transmitted diseases. I admit it was a shame to stop it, but they shouldn't be mad at me, I was just doing my job."

Clearly, Ianucci was doing his job—if that job was to enforce the rules of the Maryland State Athletic Commission. If the influence for his decision came from any other source, Lex Luger—and indeed every fan who paid to watch that match—is owed an explanation by the NWA. If the alliance fails to take action, it will indeed have become a major part of the scandal. ☐

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INTRODUCING

(Continued from page 20)

was months before he got his first match. Despite his show-biz image, Brandi's early training days were anything but glamorous.

"We didn't even have a ring to practice in," said the 6'2", 231-pounder. "We just had some mats in the backyard. That made it even harder to train for my pro debut, because I still needed to learn how to utilize the ring ropes."

Brandi was raw but eager during his first match, a loss to veteran Gypsy Rodriguez in September 1985 at a small New York arena. "It was good experience for me," he said. "Unfortunately, the loss was a sign of things to come."

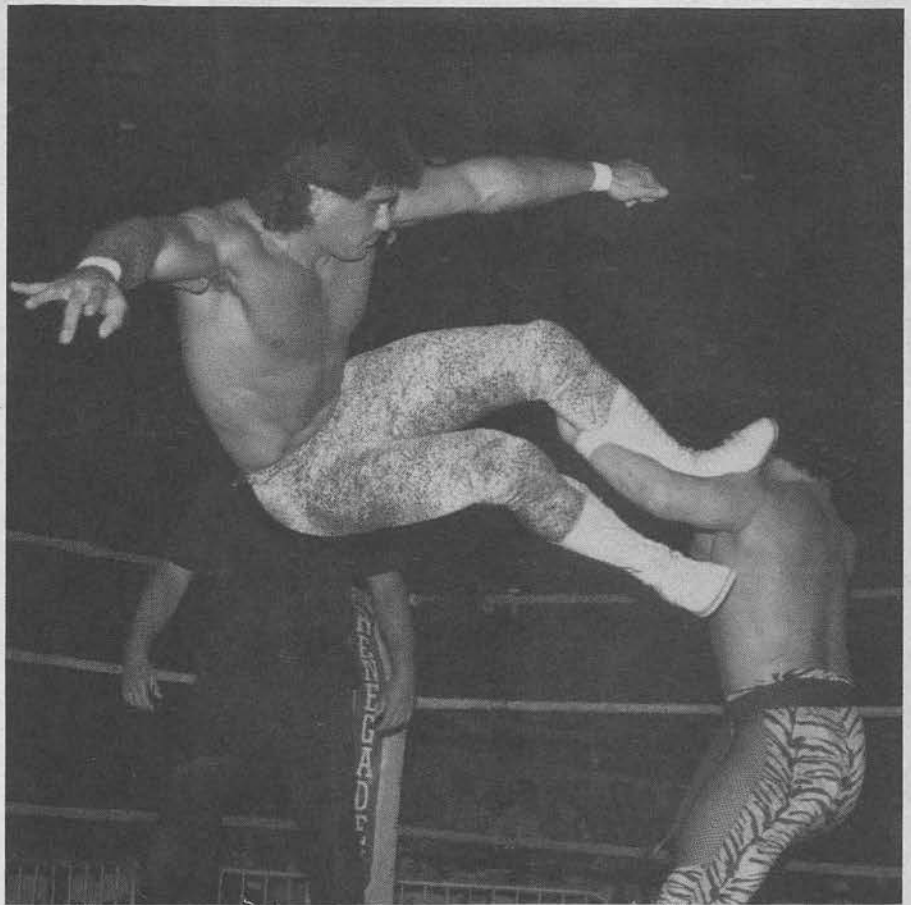
A few weeks later, Brandi had a short stint in the AWA, where he was matched against one of the wildest men in the history of the sport.

"There I was, my ninth pro match—against Stan Hansen!" he laughed. "He beat me up so badly that Rick Martel, who held the AWA World title at the time, had to come out from the dressing room to save me! That convinced me that I really had a lot of work to do."

Taking a more cautious route through the pro ranks, Brandi decided to compete in independent federations like the NWF and the ICW, gaining experience, victories, and the support of the fans. This past March he decided he was ready for the CWA.

"Back in my AWA days, I didn't really have enough knowledge," Brandi said. "Now, I've mastered hundreds of holds and I have my own original style."

Brandi's Memphis debut was a CWA television taping, and he defeated Ready of the Rough & Ready tag team in less than a minute. Ready insisted on a second try; Brandi obliged and beat



Brandi delivers a precision dropkick to the head of AWA World tag team champion Pat Tanaka. Experience as a dancer has provided Brandi with a remarkable level of agility for such a young competitor.

him just as fast. Then, Brickhouse Brown came to ringside and insisted on a chance at the young star; Brown was defeated in less than 20 seconds! In his first day in the CWA, Brandi had three victories under his belt—in less than two minutes!

Brandi opened the eyes of the wrestling establishment that day, and even Brown has made overtures about his managerial services, an offer that Brandi quickly turned down. Since then, Brandi has been active in both singles and tag matches, teaming with other young stars such as Scott Steiner, Billy Travis, Shawn Baxter, and Max Pain. And he's finally establishing himself in the won-lost column, thanks in part to his devastating flying forearm, as well as an outstanding belly-to-belly suplex.

"I'm just getting started here in Memphis," the enthusiastic Brandi said. "I really like it here, and the fans have been fantastic. I can't help but grow and improve with every match."

And the ladies can't help screaming when Brandi makes his appearances in the arena, a matter enhanced by Brandi's Chippendale-style ring attire. He insists all the attention isn't a distraction when it comes time for action.

"I'm out to prove that I'm a championship-caliber *wrestler*," Brandi insists. "It's been kind of a struggle for acceptance, since people see 'Chippendale' and think I'm just another fancy-pantsed egomaniac. But, hey, Tom Brandi can wrestle, too—and it won't be long before I win a major title to prove it." □

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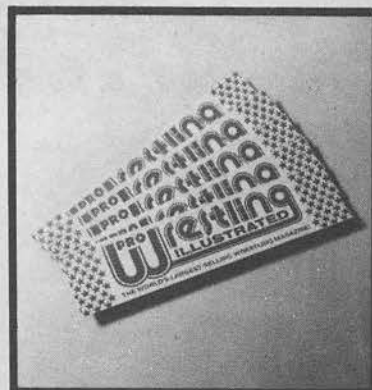
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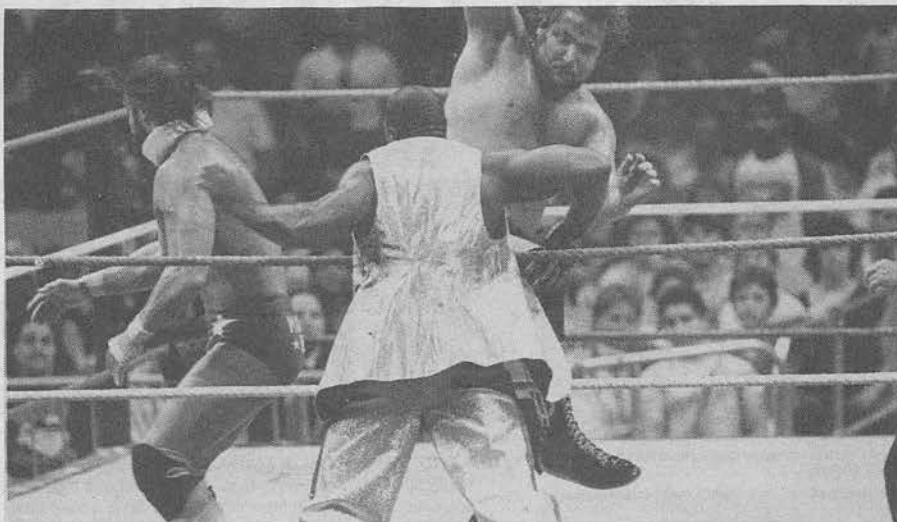
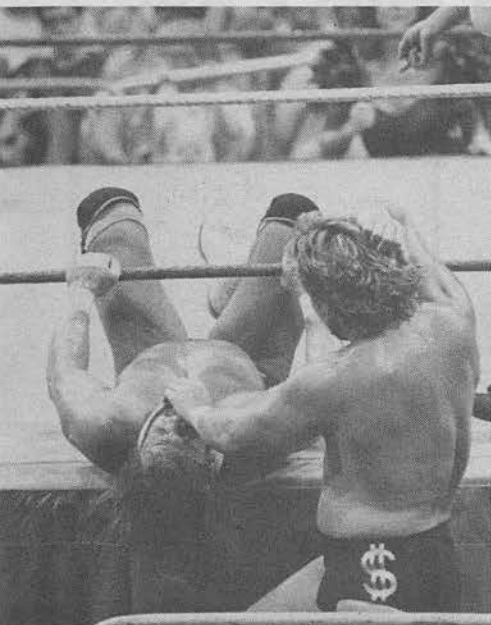
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SCANDAL—TED DiBIASE

(Continued from page 37)



DiBiase delivers an elbow to Savage's throat from the arena floor (left), inadvertently slams into Virgil as Savage ducks out of the way (above), and sadistically gloats to Elizabeth about Andre's attack on her man (below).

in failing to check the rules *before* making the purchase, he attempted to recoup his losses shortly after the WrestleMania IV World title tournament by selling Andre's contract back to Heenan. But DiBiase had more use for Andre than Heenan did, so the resale price was extremely low. "Heenan had him where he wanted him," said Assistant Editor Gersh Kuntzman, another key member of the investigative team.

Andre's reunion with Heenan paid immediate dividends when he received one of the first shots at World champion Randy Savage in New Haven, Connecticut. But shortly after Savage was disqualified in that match for hitting Andre over the head with a steel chair, Heenan decided to reverse direction and nurture the veteran. Andre was directed into a feud with Hacksaw Duggan, where he could prepare for a future meeting with Savage.

But this left Heenan with a problem: What if Savage lost the belt before Andre had a chance to wrestle him again? And what if Savage lost the belt to DiBiase? Heenan, who has never been a fan favorite in his entire career, realized that DiBiase, too, was unlikely



to become a fan favorite again. He knows, of course, that the WWF rarely grants rulebreakers title shots at fellow rulebreakers.

The results of *The Wrestler's* investigation (while not confirmed by the subjects of the investigation) indicate the following:

Heenan, in an effort too make sure that Savage *didn't* lose the belt before Andre was properly prepared to wrestle for the title, enlisted the aid of DiBiase's bodyguard Virgil.

By this time, Virgil had become disenchanted with his boss DiBiase. He hadn't forgotten that at WrestleMania IV, DiBiase hid behind Virgil when Hogan chased them down the dressing room run-

way. DiBiase threw Virgil at "The Hulkster," who slammed the bodyguard on the cement floor while DiBiase fled to the dressing room. Virgil wasn't at ringside for DiBiase's last two tournament matches (including the final against Savage), and probably would have left DiBiase's employ if not for his hefty salary.

Virgil wanted revenge. And Heenan, who now had more money than he ever dreamed of having—thanks to DiBiase—gave him the opportunity. "It was a six-figure deal," Associate Editor Eddie Ellner learned, "probably in the neighborhood of about \$400,000. Heenan instructed Virgil to interfere or cause DiBiase to be dis-

qualified whenever Ted was close to pinning Savage."

Several incidents indicate that Virgil has done his job well. On June 1 in Oakland, California, DiBiase was on the verge of victory when Virgil ran into the ring. But Virgil's attempt to interfere merely distracted DiBiase and gave Savage time to roll him up for the pin. Four days earlier in Madison Square Garden, DiBiase again had Savage on the run, but was disqualified due to Virgil's interference.

There have also been rumors that WWF officials had hoped to sign a no-disqualification, no-time-limit cage match between Savage and DiBiase for the August 29 pay-per-view TV card at Madison Square Garden, thus assuring either a submission or pinfall. But Heenan reportedly got in the way of these plans. Instead, WWF officials signed a tag team match pitting Hogan and Savage against DiBiase and Andre for the main event.

"It was carefully planned, carefully thought out," said Editor-in-Chief Stu Saks upon examining the evidence. "All this time, DiBiase thinks Virgil, Heenan, and Andre are on his side, but it appears that nothing could be further from the truth. The irony of this whole thing is that Heenan used DiBiase's money to buy off Virgil. It's absolutely diabolical, but pure Heenan!"

The saddest aspect of the situation is that the integrity of the WWF World title, a championship held by some of the greatest athletes of this century, is once again in danger.

Nobody could ever feel sorry for the evil DiBiase, a man whose hobby is buying people. Turnabout is, after all, fair play. Instead, feel sorry for Bruno Sammartino, Ivan Koloff, Pedro Morales, Superstar Graham, Bob Backlund, Hulk Hogan, Randy Savage—and the fans—who have been forced to witness this sad chapter in the history of the WWF. ☐

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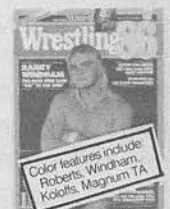
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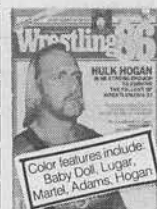
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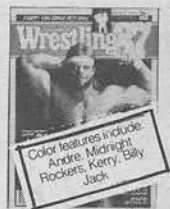
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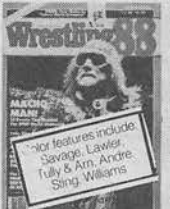
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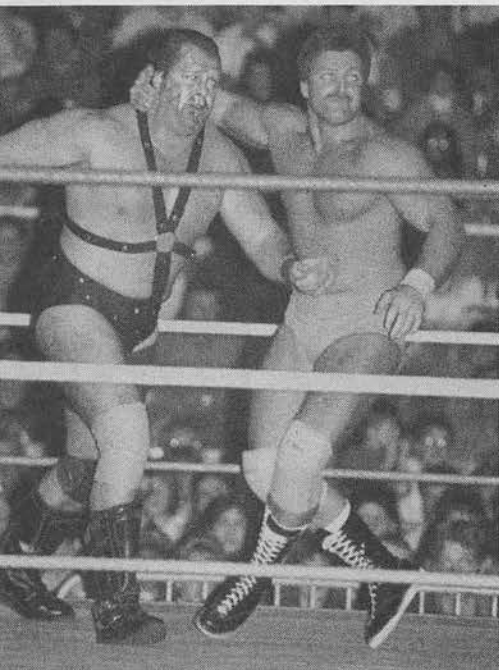
CORRESPONDENTS REPORTS

(Continued from page 16)

Niagara Falls, NY (*Correspondent—Christopher Jaskowiak*):

A recent main event here saw Jacques and Raymond, the Rougeau brothers, challenge Demolition for the WWF World tag team title.

Smash started with Jacques, battering him with vicious chops and axhandles. Ax entered, and the champs slammed Jacques into the turnbuckles. Raymond ran in and argued with the referee, and while the official was distracted, Demolition kicked and punched Jacques to the canvas.



Raymond Rougeau grabs Demolition Ax by the scruff of the neck and hurls him across the ring. Demolition defeated the Rougeaus by pinfall in Niagara Falls, New York.

Ax threw Jacques out of the ring. Mr. Fuji and Smash worked Jacques over with Fuji's cane, then threw him back in the ring. Ax missed with an elbowedrop, allowing Raymond to tag in and stun Ax with a flying dropkick off the top rope. Smash came in and punched Raymond, then Jacques knocked Smash out of the ring with a flying forearm smash.

The seesaw battle continued. The Rougeaus tried to beat the champions with high-flying ma-

neuvers, but the moves were all but negated by Demolition's bulk and power. Jacques and Raymond began double-teaming Ax, but Smash entered the battle and a wild four-man brawl ensued.

The end came when Raymond slammed Ax and went for a cradle. Smash came off the ropes and chopped Raymond down with a flying clothesline; Ax quickly covered the stunned Rougeau for the pin.

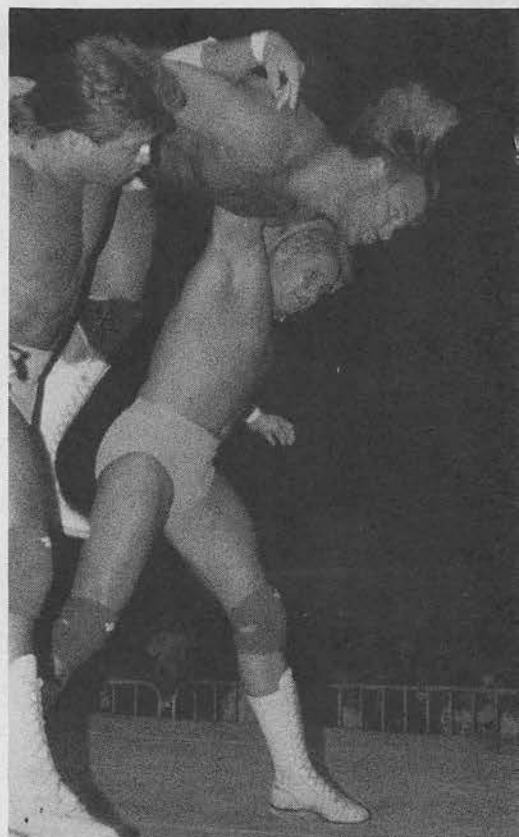
In other bouts: Andre the Giant beat Hacksaw Duggan ... Rick Rude beat Jake Roberts ... Hillbilly Jim beat Barry Horowitz ... Frenchy Martin defeated Sam Houston ... Big Bossman beat up Lanny Poffo ... Ultimate Warrior defeated Dino Bravo.

Nashville, TN (*Correspondents—Ronnie Proffitt & Alan Lawhorn*):

This was a no-disqualification match for the U.S. tag team title between The Fantastics and The Midnight Express. The Fantastics took advantage of the no-DQ stipulation and used illegal double-teaming and punching tactics throughout the match.

Although the Midnights tried to rely on a scientific style, Jim Cornette's tennis racket came into play once during the match when Bobby Fulton and Tommy Rogers tried to double-team the Express. This took the momentum away from the Fantastics and, as the match wore on, the Midnights gained the edge and were on the verge of regaining the U.S. tag belts from their archrivals.

Rogers and Fulton rallied by double-teaming and keeping Bobby Eaton trapped in their corner. When Stan Lane finally tagged in, he started beating both Rogers and Fulton with karate kicks. In the end, Eaton threw Fulton out of the ring, and both Eaton and Lane beat on Rogers. Fulton re-



Tommy Rogers and Bobby Fulton double-team Stan Lane with a two-man hiptoss. The Midnight Express were cheered in Nashville, and The Fantastics were booed!

covered to execute a flying bodypress on Eaton to score the pin.

But the Midnights weren't done yet. To the *cheers* of the fans, they attacked Rogers and Fulton after the bell and left them beaten in the middle of the ring. Even Cornette got into the act by punching Fulton several times and delivering a fistdrop!

Just days later, at the Baltimore Great American Bash, the Midnights would continue on their winning momentum and capture the U.S. tag belts from Rogers and Fulton.

In other bouts: Lex Luger and Barry Windham battled to a double-countout ... Steve Williams & Sting beat NWA World tag team champions Tully Blanchard & Arn Anderson by DQ ... Ronnie Garvin drew with Mike Rotundo ... Jim Garvin beat Kevin Sullivan. □

YOU ASKED US

(Continued from page 18)

Ted DiBiase?"—Tim Jones, Baytown, Texas

A: "I don't keep up with him as much as I used to," Williams said. "Back in the UWF, we were pretty close. Then, when Ted left, we made sort of a gentlemen's bet. I said I'd have a world belt before he did, and he, naturally, thought otherwise. I think it's obvious who's going to win this bet."

Q: "I'd like to know what Curt Hennig's plans are for regaining the AWA World title."—Rich Levine, Westchester, PA

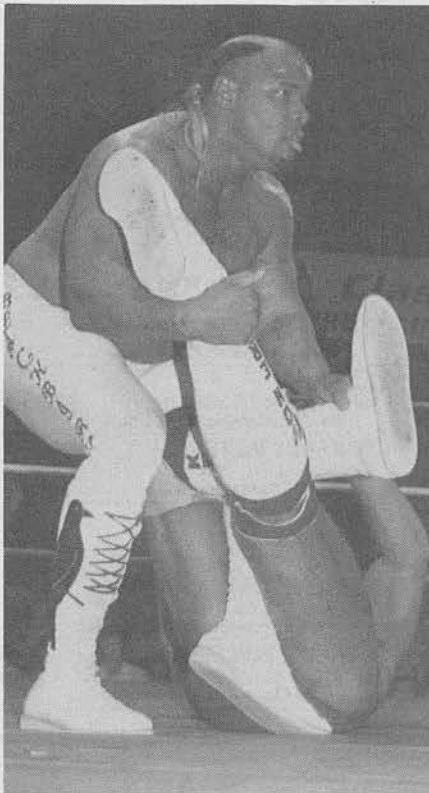
A: Senior Editor Bill Apter answered: "Hennig has actually had some success in his recent matches with Lawler and, in fact, gained a full three-count on 'The King' in a recent match in Memphis. Unfortunately for Hennig, referee Jerry Calhoun had been knocked out. When he awoke, he negated the title change saying that the three-count, which was administered by Robert Fuller in a referee's uniform, was invalid. Fuller isn't a licensed referee, you see. Since then, Hennig has been negotiating with Paul E. Dangerously for his managerial services. If you ask me, an association between Eddie Gilbert and Hennig would be virtually unstoppable—and a lot of trouble for Lawler!"

Q: "My question is for Ric Flair: Although I think it's highly unlikely that you will lose your NWA World title at any time in the foreseeable future, who do you think could ever beat you?"—Jon Gillum, Battle Creek, MI

A: "First of all," Flair answered, "whether you like it, or whether you *don't* like it, I am the greatest champion of all time. There is no one who can beat me. *Whooo!* And I have a message for the *unwrapped* package: Lex Luger, you had your chance in Baltimore, but

you bled. Next time, you'll be bleeding out of more than just one little cut in your forehead, you punk."

Q: "I would like to ask Iceman Parsons how he plans to get the World Class title back from Kerry Von Erich."—Mike Johansmeyer, Intercourse, PA



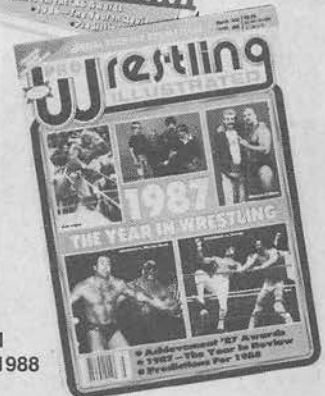
Iceman Parsons moves in on Kerry Von Erich with the figure-four leglock. Parsons is determined to regain Kerry's World Class heavyweight title.

A: Parsons answered: "I realize what I been doing wrong all along; I was trying to do it all by myself. Now, you see, I got some help from my friends, good men like Buddy Roberts, Black Bart, and Gen. Skandor Akbar, and I'm hoping to put an *end* to the ol' rooty-poot Von Erich myth. I've beaten him before, and I'll beat him again. Von Erich's gonna be yesterday's news, and it's gonna happen so fast his fool head's gonna spin off his neck like a damn corkscrew! Believe it, brother!" ☐

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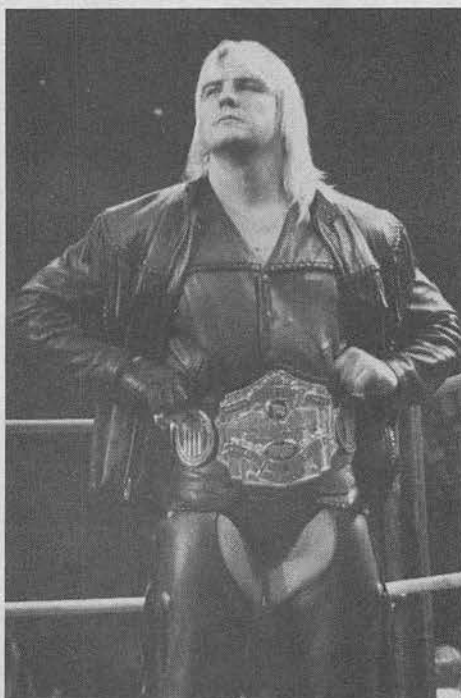
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Wrestler^{THE}



Barry Windham

TOP 10

- 1 RANDY SAVAGE**
245, Sarasota, FL
WWF World champion
- 2 RIC FLAIR**
243, Minneapolis, MN
NWA World champion
- 3 JERRY LAWLER**
234, Memphis, TN
AWA World champion
- 4 TED DIBIASE**
247, Omaha, NB
No. 2 contender: WWF title
- 5 LEX LUGER**
268, Chicago, IL
No. 2 contender: NWA title
- 6 STING**
260, Venice Beach, CA
No. 3 contender: NWA title
- 7 KERRY VON ERICH**
260, Denton, TX
World Class champion
- 8 BARRY WINDHAM**
236, Sweetwater, TX
U.S. heavyweight champion
- 9 THE HONKY TONK MAN**
255, Memphis, TN
WWF Intercontinental champion
- 10 KEVIN VON ERICH**
235, Denton, TX
World Class Texas champion

TAG TEAMS

- 1 TULLY BLANCHARD & ARN ANDERSON**
Combined weight: 484 pounds
NWA World tag team champions
- 2 THE ROAD WARRIORS**
Combined weight: 567 pounds
No. 1 contenders: NWA tag team title
- 3 DEMOLITION**
Combined weight: 585 pounds
WWF World tag team champions
- 4 BOBBY EATON & STAN LANE**
Combined weight: 453 pounds
U.S. tag team champions
- 5 WARLORD & BARBARIAN**
Combined weight: 655 pounds
No. 1 contenders: WWF tag team title
- 6 THE FANTASTICS**
Combined weight: 462 pounds
No. 1 contenders: U.S. tag team title
- 7 PAT TANAKA & PAUL DIAMOND**
Combined weight: 456 pounds
AWA World tag team champions
- 8 THE HART FOUNDATION**
Combined weight: 515 pounds
No. 2 contenders: WWF tag team title
- 9 THE ROCK 'N' ROLL EXPRESS**
Combined weight: 453 pounds
No. 2 contenders: U.S. tag team title
- 10 KERRY & KEVIN VON ERICH**
Combined weight: 495 pounds
World Class tag team champions

NWA

World Champion:
RIC FLAIR

243, Minneapolis, MN

- 1—BARRY WINDHAM**
236, Sweetwater, TX
- 2—LEX LUGER**
268, Chicago, IL
- 3—STING**
260, Venice Beach, CA
- 4—DUSTY RHODES**
302, Austin, TX
- 5—STEVE WILLIAMS**
265, Norman, OK
- 6—AL PEREZ**
238, Tampa, FL
- 7—NIKITA KOLOFF**
275, Moscow, Russia
- 8—MIKE ROTUNDO**
245, Syracuse, NY
- 9—RONNIE GARVIN**
231, Montreal, Quebec
- 10—LARRY ZBYSZKO**
248, Pittsburgh, PA

WWF

World Champion:
RANDY SAVAGE

245, Sarasota, FL

- 1—THE HONKY TONK MAN**
255, Memphis, TN
- 2—TED DIBIASE**
247, Omaha, NB
- 3—ANDRE THE GIANT**
497, Grenoble, France
- 4—BRUTUS BEEFCAKE**
273, San Francisco, CA
- 5—HACKSAW DUGGAN**
280, Glens Falls, NY
- 6—JAKE ROBERTS**
246, Stone Mountain, GA
- 7—RICK RUDE**
246, Robbinsdale, MN
- 8—DON MURACO**
274, Sunset Beach, HI
- 9—GREG VALENTINE**
243, Seattle, WA
- 10—THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR**
280, Queens, NY

AWA

World Champion:
JERRY LAWLER

234, Memphis, TN

- 1—GREG GAGNE**
220, Robbinsdale, MN
- 2—SOLDAT USTINOV**
265, Moscow, Russia
- 3—WAHOO McDANIEL**
280, Midland, TX
- 4—EDDIE GILBERT**
222, Lexington, TN
- 5—MANNY FERNANDEZ**
245, El Paso, TX
- 6—JEFF JARRETT**
200, Hendersonville, TN
- 7—PHIL HICKERSON**
257, Jackson, TN
- 8—BARON VON RASCHKE**
271, Berlin, Germany
- 9—MANDO GUERRERO**
225, Mexico City, MEX
- 10—TEIJO KHAN**
265, Singapore

WORLD CLASS

World Class Champion:
KERRY VON ERICH

260, Denton, TX

- 1—KEVIN VON ERICH**
235, Denton, TX
- 2—KAMALA**
360, Uganda
- 3—ICEMAN PARSONS**
245, St. Louis, MO
- 4—ERIC EMBRY**
225, Lexington, KY
- 5—STEVE CASEY**
230, San Antonio, TX
- 6—BUDDY ROBERTS**
247, Del City, OK
- 7—MICHAEL HAYES**
255, Marietta, GA
- 8—TERRY GORDY**
289, Chattanooga, TN
- 9—BILL IRWIN**
250, Duluth, MN
- 10—BLACK BART**
261, Pampa, TX

OFFICIAL RATINGS

Top 10 and Tag Team ratings are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of each wrestler or team. These ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board. Most Popular and Most Hated ratings are based on nationwide telephone and arena surveys of wrestling fans and on the volume and character of mail that comes to our offices. All other ratings are based on the official current positions of challengers to the top title in each category; certain titleholders receive an automatic spot in the ratings.

MOST POPULAR

- 1 RANDY SAVAGE**
245, Sarasota, FL
Last month: No. 1 Most Popular
- 2 STING**
260, Venice Beach, CA
Last month: No. 2 Most Popular
- 3 LEX LUGER**
268, Chicago, IL
Last month: No. 3 Most Popular
- 4 JAKE ROBERTS**
246, Stone Mountain, GA
Last month: unrated
- 5 DUSTY RHODES**
302, Austin, TX
Last month: No. 5 Most Popular
- 6 HACKSAW DUGGAN**
280, Glens Falls, NY
Last month: No. 4 Most Popular
- 7 JERRY LAWLER**
234, Memphis, TN
Last month: No. 6 Most Popular
- 8 KERRY VON ERICH**
260, Denton, TX
Last month: No. 7 Most Popular
- 9 THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR**
280, Queens, NY
Last month: No. 8 Most Popular
- 10 KEVIN VON ERICH**
235, Denton, TX
Last month: No. 10 Most Popular

MOST HATED

- 1 ANDRE THE GIANT**
497, Grenoble, France
Last month: No. 1 Most Hated
- 2 RIC FLAIR**
243, Minneapolis, MN
Last month: No. 3 Most Hated
- 3 TED DIBIASE**
247, Omaha, NB
Last month: No. 4 Most Hated
- 4 BARRY WINDHAM**
236, Sweetwater, TX
Last month: No. 2 Most Hated
- 5 RICK RUDE**
246, Robbinsdale, MN
Last month: No. 6 Most Hated
- 6 THE HONKY TONK MAN**
255, Memphis, TN
Last month: No. 5 Most Hated
- 7 EDDIE GILBERT**
222, Lexington, TN
Last month: No. 7 Most Hated
- 8 RONNIE GARVIN**
231, Montreal, Quebec
Last month: unrated
- 9 MANNY FERNANDEZ**
245, El Paso, TX
Last month: unrated
- 10 GREG VALENTINE**
243, Seattle, WA
Last month: unrated

For period ended July 28, 1988

CUMULATIVE RATINGS

These ratings are based on the past 10 issues of this magazine. We have examined our ratings for each of those issues—in our Top 10 and Tag Team categories only—and assigned each position a point value: 10 points for a number-one rating, nine for a number-two ranking, and so on down to one point for a number-10 rating. The point values for all wrestlers in the past 10 issues have been compiled, allowing a maximum of 100 points. Each issue we'll present the top five finishers in each category. While our regular ratings reflect the past month, these cumulative ratings give an indication of wider trends in the sport.

SINGLES

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------|
| 1—RIC FLAIR | 95 points |
| 2—RANDY SAVAGE | 73 points |
| 3—HULK HOGAN | 54 points |
| 4—LEX LUGER | 48 points |
| 5—STING | 37 points |

TAG TEAMS

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1—TULLY BLANCHARD & ARN ANDERSON ... | 91 points |
| 2—THE ROAD WARRIORS | 85 points |
| 3—BOBBY EATON & STAN LANE | 67 points |
| 4—DEMOLITION | 48 points |
| 5—RICK MARTEL & TITO SANTANA | 42 points |

STAMPEDE

North American Champion:
MAKHAN SINGH

380, Saginaw, MI

- 1—JOHNNY SMITH**
235, Manchester, England
- 2—STEVE DISALVO**
298, Boston, MA
- 3—CHRIS BENOIT**
218, Edmonton, Alberta
- 4—STEVE BLACKMAN**
250, Pittsburgh, PA
- 5—BRUCE HART**
211, Calgary, Alberta
- 6—BRIAN PILLMAN**
226, Cincinnati, OH
- 7—VULCAN SINGH**
300, Billings, MT
- 8—CUBAN ASSASSIN**
236, Cuba
- 9—JERRY MORROW**
235, Martinique
- 10—GAMA SINGH**
220, Karachi, Pakistan

CWA

CWA Champion:
PHIL HICKERSON

257, Jackson, TN

- 1—MAX PAIN**
350, Iowa City, IA
- 2—BRICKHOUSE BROWN**
225, Winter Haven, FL
- 3—ROBERT FULLER**
238, Dyresburg, TN
- 4—SCOTT STEINER**
235, Detroit, MI
- 5—JEFF JARRETT**
200, Hendersonville, TN
- 6—GARY YOUNG**
240, Houston, TX
- 7—JIMMY GOLDEN**
235, Montgomery, AL
- 8—JIMMY VALIANT**
251, New York, NY
- 9—BILLY TRAVIS**
218, Houston, TX
- 10—THE GREAT SENSHE**
265, Tokyo, Japan

CONTINENTAL

Continental Champion:
TITLE VACANT

To be filled in elimination tourney

- 1—EDDIE GILBERT**
222, Lexington, TN
- 2—AUSTIN IDOL**
240, Las Vegas, NV
- 3—LORD HUMONGOUS**
325, parts unknown
- 4—KEN WAYNE**
208, Memphis, TN
- 5—TOM PRICHARD**
220, Houston, TX
- 6—TONY ANTHONY**
235, Bucksnorth, TN
- 7—DETROIT DEMOLITION**
310, Detroit, MI
- 8—DAN DAVIS**
238, Nashville, TN
- 9—SHANE DOUGLAS**
223, Pittsburgh, PA
- 10—MR. OLYMPIA**
242, parts unknown

WINDY CITY WRESTLING

Windy City Champion:
STEVE REGAL

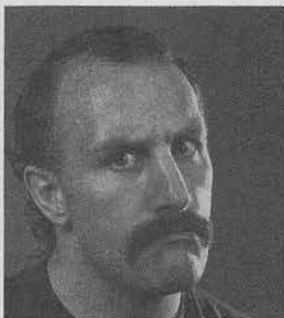
223, Indianapolis, IN

- 1—COL. DeBEERS**
248, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2—BAM BAM BIGELOW**
368, Mt. Laurel, NJ
- 3—NORD THE BARBARIAN**
316, Bozeman, MT
- 4—LARRY CAMERON**
270, Chicago, IL
- 5—EDDIE GILBERT**
222, Lexington, TN
- 6—TERMINATOR RIGS**
255, parts unknown
- 7—DENNIS CONDREY**
256, Marietta, GA
- 8—RANDY ROSE**
246, Pensacola, FL
- 9—MIGHTY THOR**
268, parts unknown
- 10—ABDULLAH THE BUTCHER**
360, Khartoum, Sudan

RATINGS ANALYSIS

Every month, this column will tell fans how we go about rating more than 135 wrestlers in 12 different categories. It is a behind-the-scenes look at the most important—and respected—ratings system in the sport. This column is vital reading for all wrestling fans.

The Road Warriors are angry! And when The Road Warriors get angry, you find out about it in a hurry. Actually, **Hawk**, **Animal**, and their brilliant manager **Paul Ellering** have been mad for about three months. But, in Hawk's words, "we thought you guys made *another* mistake, so we let it slide." Then the Warriors ran into Senior Editor **Bill Apter** in Philadelphia and made their feelings known.



Paul Ellering

"Hey, Apter," Ellering said when he spotted Bill in the Civic Center dressing room. "What's the story with you guys making **Tully Blanchard** and **Arn Anderson** number one in those worthless tag team ratings of yours? It's been three months now, and my boys are getting a little tired of it. And you know what happens when my boys start getting restless!"

Just as Bill told Ellering that the current issue of *The Wrestler* and *Inside Wrestling* would make it four—not three—consecutive months that the Warriors weren't number one in the tag team ratings, Hawk and Animal emerged from the trainer's room. "They looked like they were about to kill somebody," said Apter, "and I thought for a second that that somebody was *me*."

Bill explained that the ratings are based on won-lost records, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of the team. He conceded that the Warriors are a more skilled team than Blanchard and Anderson, but added that the NWA World tag champs are riding a solid unbeaten streak against the best teams in the federation. The Warriors, meanwhile, have been involved in scaffold matches against **Ivan Koloff** and **The Russian Assassin**, who clearly stand a notch below "The Legion of Doom."

Unfortunately, Apter's explanation didn't wash with the Warriors. "That's a load of crap," Animal growled. "Let's see you get up on that scaffold, wimp. Blanchard and Anderson would be easy prey for us if we *wanted* the tag belts, but we've got business to take care of. You can't honestly sit there and say that Blanchard and Anderson would survive five minutes in the ring with us."

The Warriors, of course, might simply be taking their frustrations out on Apter. They are still bothered about losing the All-Japan International tag team belts to **Jumbo Tsuruta** and **Yoshiaki Yatsu** in June. Although they publicly gloat about running **The Powers of Pain** out of the NWA, they'll privately admit that they never had the chance to satisfactorily whip **Warlord** and **Barbarian** prior to their departure.

And they dearly want the NWA World tag team belts. Don't believe otherwise. Any team with the competitive instinct of the Warriors feels the need for those championship belts.

For now, however, they're number two.

Something new. Why are some wrestlers popular? This month, "Ratings Analysis" takes a look at the "Most Popular" ratings to try to get some answers. Next month, a look at the "Most Hated" category.

When **Hulk Hogan** took a brief vacation from wrestling, it was thought that attendance at WWF arenas would drop drastically. Such has not been the case, thanks to new World champion **Randy Savage**, the most popular wrestler in the land. Machomania has been a more than adequate replacement for Hulkamania in the eyes of the fans ... Did everybody hear the reaction for **Sting** at the Baltimore Great American Bash? Undoubtedly, Sting received the loudest ovation of the night. He's taken the NWA by storm! ... Many people thought that **Lex Luger** was robbed in his match against NWA World champion **Ric Flair**, and that will add to his popularity. The female fans love his good looks; the male fans are awed by his power ... **Jake "The Snake" Roberts** came to the rescue of his wife **Cheryl**, started a war against **Rick Rude**, and gained a new legion of followers ... **Dusty Rhodes**, perennially popular, charmed even those that *don't* watch wrestling with his Mello Yello TV commercial ... **Hacksaw Duggan** can excite a crowd like few other wrestlers. He keeps the fans screaming for entire matches ... **Jerry "The King" Lawler** has picked up new fans and new respect with his decision to defend the AWA World title in several federations ... **Kerry Von Erich's** popularity has waned since 1984, but "The Modern-Day Warrior" still has the Von Erich charisma, charm, and good looks ... As far as the ladies are concerned, **The Ultimate Warrior** is the most popular man in the WWF ... And **Kevin Von Erich** showed why the Von Erichs are so popular when he "wrestled" in a charity match against two-year-old **Jessica McClure**.

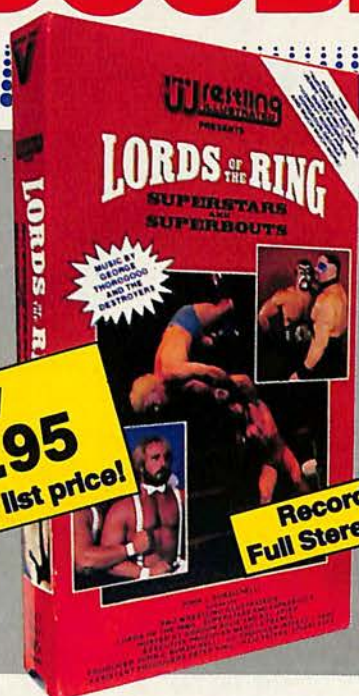


Hacksaw Duggan

Everyone knows it's windy ... Windy City Wrestling, that is, which makes its first appearance in our revolving ratings category this month. Operating out of Chicago and throughout Illinois, Windy City is one of the newest federations in the sport, yet boasts some outstanding talent, including **Bam Bam Bigelow** (recently departed from the WWF), the legendary **Abdullah the Butcher**, and **Paul E. Dangerously's** army, including **Eddie Gilbert**. The Windy City heavyweight champion is **Steve Regal**.

Agree to disagree ... or agree to agree. Either way, we want to hear what you think about our ratings. The address for mail is: "Ratings Analysis" c/o *The Wrestler*, Box 48, Rockville Centre, NY 11571. □

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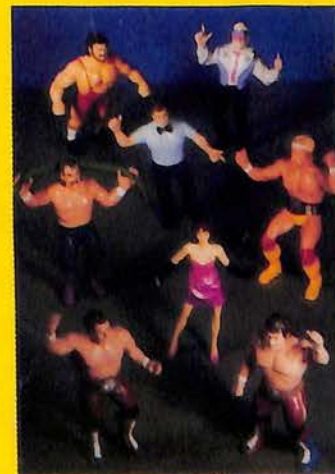
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